

# Mobile Beat

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE • WWW.MOBILEBEAT.COM

ISSUE 144 SEPTEMBER 2012

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## MAKING YOUR MOVE:

**GETTING YOUR GEAR, YOUR BIZ AND YOUR HEAD  
INTO POSITION FOR SUCCESS**

### WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

Ruling Your Performance Space

### GET SET FOR GREAT SOUND

Practical Speaker Placement

### MAKING YOUR MOVE

The Benefits of Relocating Your Business

### KEEPING IT ALL TOGETHER

Gear Organization Secrets

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It's Only Rock & Roll...But I Like It  
Wedding Tunes by Tony Carter

## BUSINESS

Book More Brides with Facebook  
School Sales Tune-Up

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Multiple Dimensions: Location DJs  
Dick Clark Remembered

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Line 6 StageSource Speakers  
American Audio VMS 4.1 Controller  
CHAUVET Freedom Series LEDs  
Eardam Personal Protection

DJUniversity

Presented By:



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Pioneer Dj



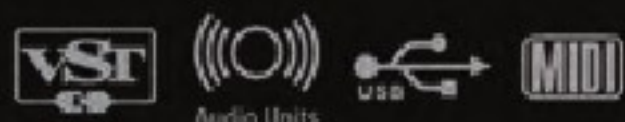
# “HOUSTON, WE HAVE A REMIX.”

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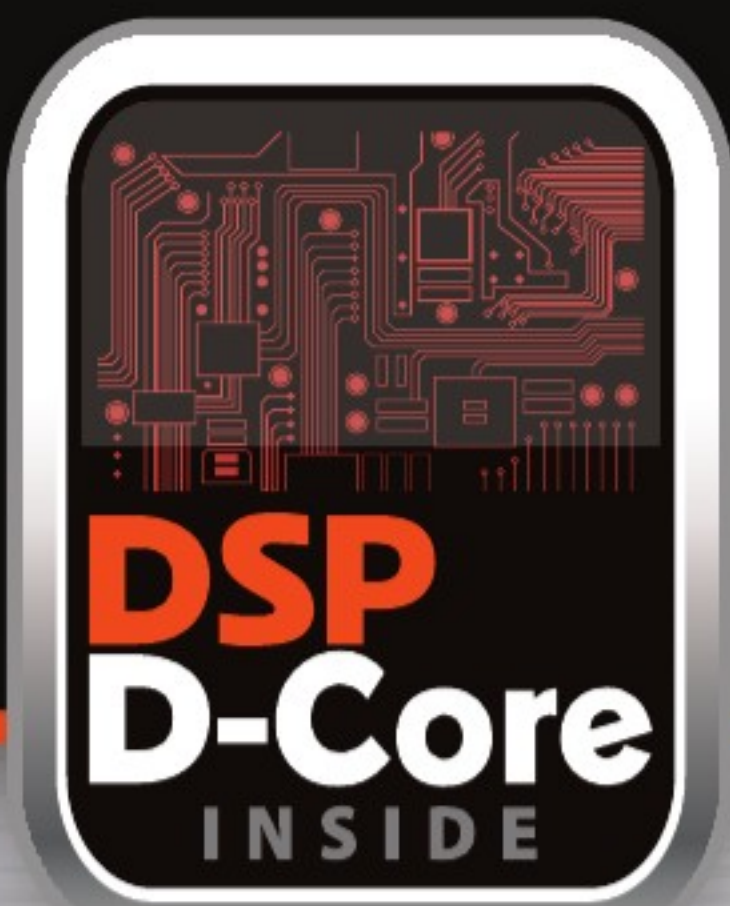
## RMX-1000 REMIX STATION

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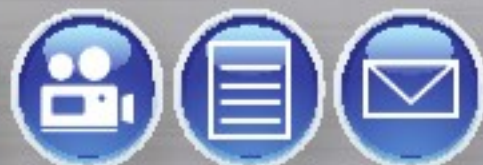
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# POWER TO THE PEOPLE

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There's a time to plan, to strategize; to size up your show, your business, your market. But there always comes a moment when you need to make a decision, take a step or make a change to move your career forward. For DJs it may involve performance, gear or business; for anyone, it can be the most difficult thing to do: to make your move.

In this issue, publisher Ryan Burger talks to a number of DJ company owners who made the move to bigger, better business locations...and reaped rewards for doing so. Stu Chisholm and Jake Feldman talk about ways the location of your gear—whether it's speakers on the dance floor, or gear in your warehouse—can make or break your performances. Stu also goes beyond the literal as he shares about the two "places" his dual career has taken him. Mike Ficher offers some thoughts on how to make better use of the space in which you find yourself performing, while Rob Johnson shows how game shows provide a go-anywhere entertainment option for mobile DJs. Looking at how mobiles get from here to there, Mike Ryan serves up a big helping of tips for DJ vehicle preparedness.

We're all on a journey, and looking at others' pathways can yield insights into our own. In this spirit, we offer a profile of Location DJs (DJ Michael Paul and DJ John Joseph) and their trip from mobile to club and back. And Rick Ellis describes the late Dick Clark's road from small town radio DJ to rock & roll taste maker.

Speaking of rock & roll, Jay Maxwell tips his hat to the genre with a list of classics designed to rock your shows when there is a need for guitar-based loudness. Those who are always on the lookout for unique wedding music to help break out of the latest first dance fad will be interested in our profile of songwriter Tony Carter and what he has to offer DJs. Matt Blank zeros in on the end of the gig, with some thoughts on how choose that all-important last song.

Before there's a last song, there's the process of building a business and getting the gig. John Stiernberg continues his good counsel on business planning, while guest tax and finance expert Mark Battersby offers some guidance in determining just what those business expenses REALLY cost. We are also very glad to welcome MBLV speaker Stephanie Padovani to the business pages to share fresh ways to "book more brides." Here she lays down the law on how to market to brides on Facebook.

There's quite a bit more packed into this issue, as always, but allow me to take a moment to gloat over something shiny and new on these pages. Specifically the cover page: You'll notice a new Mobile Beat logo gracing the cover, the first new look for us in over a decade. It may not seem like a big deal, but to us it represents a breath of fresh air and a step into a new "place" for the magazine, as well as MobileBeat.com, where it is helping us streamline the look of our online presence.

And the in-person piece of our yearly puzzle is falling into place nicely: Check out page 10 for a major update on the quickly approaching Las Vegas tradeshow and conference set for 2013: MBLV17. Another awesome February event is taking shape, so don't miss making the journey to the Entertainment Capitol to start your year off on the right foot!

- Dan Walsh, Editor-In-Chief

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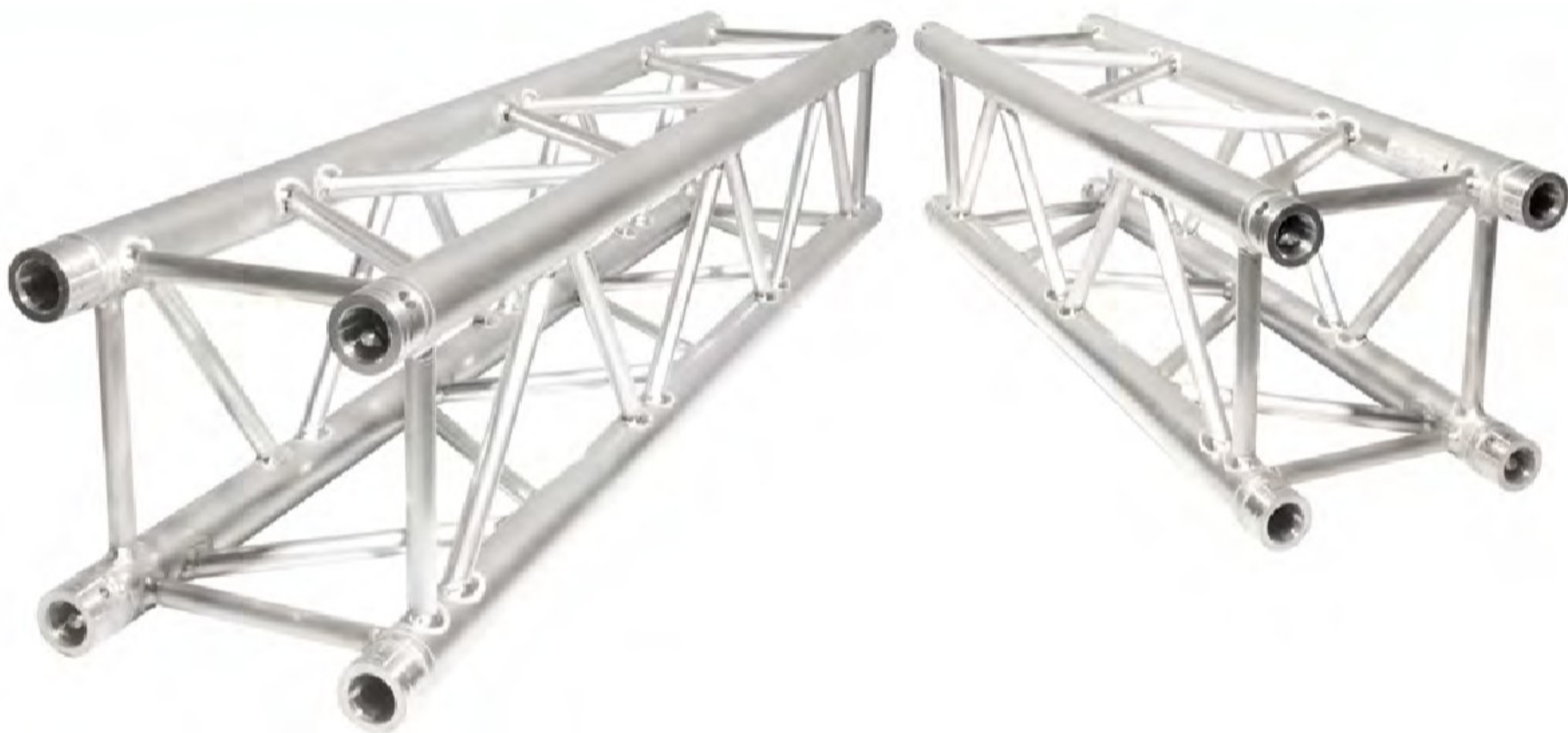


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## Gator Videos from Wizard

Keith Shocklee, aka Wizard K-Jee, is a Brooklyn-based DJ and mobile entertainer mostly known for his role as original member of the hip hop icon, Public Enemy. A groundbreaking influence for the past 30 years, Keith is still heavily active in the music industry today.

Keith was introduced to Gator's line of G-CLUB and G-TOUR series DJ cases at the recent 2011 Winter NAMM show. He was immediately drawn to the sleek styling of the Club Series soft bags as well as the heavy duty protection of Gator's G-TOUR cases.



After spending some time with Gator's revolutionary DJ ARM mount for Laptops and iPads, Keith was ready to outfit his gear with Gator.

Not only was the Wizard K-Jee impressed with his

new Gator setup, he has produced a series of short video commercials promoting Gator's DJ line and the importance of protecting your gear while on the road. The videos are available from the official Gator Cases Youtube Channel: [www.youtube.com/gatorcases](http://www.youtube.com/gatorcases).

## Hercules RMX 2 Tour

Fans of the DJ Console RMX are invited to celebrate its successor, the RMX 2, during the Hercules World Tour: It's Your Turn. A leader in mobile DJ controllers for PC and Mac, Hercules is proud

to announce the new DJConsole RMX 2, the newest controller and worthy successor to the DJ Console RMX. Available mid-August 2012, the DJConsole RMX 2 is perfect

for fans of the original DJ Console RMX and the talented new generation of mobile DJs looking for professional gear combining performance, versatility and mobility at an affordable price.

Hercules invites DJs to live the DJConsole RMX 2 experience from a unique perspective during the World Tour: It's Your Turn event, which will run from the end of summer until the end of the year, allowing DJs to practice mixing, learn new techniques, enhance skills, participate in DJing contests, and team up with emerging DJing artists to share their unique passion. Sign up for the Hercules newsletter at [www.hercules.com](http://www.hercules.com) to find out about tour stops in your area.

*Turn to page 55 for more on the new DJ Console RMX 2.*



## The Silent Disco Experience

Sennheiser hosted a Silent Disco during The Governors Ball Music Festival on Randall's Island on June 23 and 24, 2012. Thousands of festival-goers donned Sennheiser RS 120 wireless headphones and danced under a "big top" tent to energetic mixes from international DJs. To onlookers, it appeared as though participants were dancing in silence as the mixes could only be heard by those wearing Sennheiser wireless headphones.

"The Sennheiser Silent Disco was one of the festival's biggest draws," said Tammi Montier, senior vice president of partnership marketing for Revolution Marketing, who worked closely with Sennheiser to host the event. "At a festival like this, there is always dancing by the stages while the bands are playing, but there are plenty of people who want to interact with friends and express themselves in more of a dance club experience..."

International DJs such as Nobody Beats the Drum, DJ Sookai and Hype Machine pumped out mixes for 10 hours straight each day before the festival closed at 11:00 PM each night. During the evening hours, the silent disco tent was illuminated with strobes, colored lights and a mirrorball, adding a psychedelic visual touch to the audio experience.

You can find all the latest information on Sennheiser by visiting [www.sennheiserusa.com](http://www.sennheiserusa.com).



## DJUniversity

Presented By:



Among the latest articles at DJ University, you will find:

### *The Inside Scoop on Wireless Fixtures*

By Nick Airriess, CHAUVET® DJ Product Specialist

Wireless DMX provides mobile entertainers with a simple and convenient DMX solution without the hassle, time and expense of DMX cables. The best way to enhance a fixture with built-in wireless DMX is adding battery power and an infrared remote control (IRC)—imagine the possibilities with a 100% wireless fixture. Need to setup uplighting in a historic building or location with limited sources of power? Not a problem. Have a limited amount of time to setup/breakdown and don't want the added cost of extra labor?...

For the rest of this, and other great articles, go to [www.mobilebeat.com/dj-university](http://www.mobilebeat.com/dj-university)





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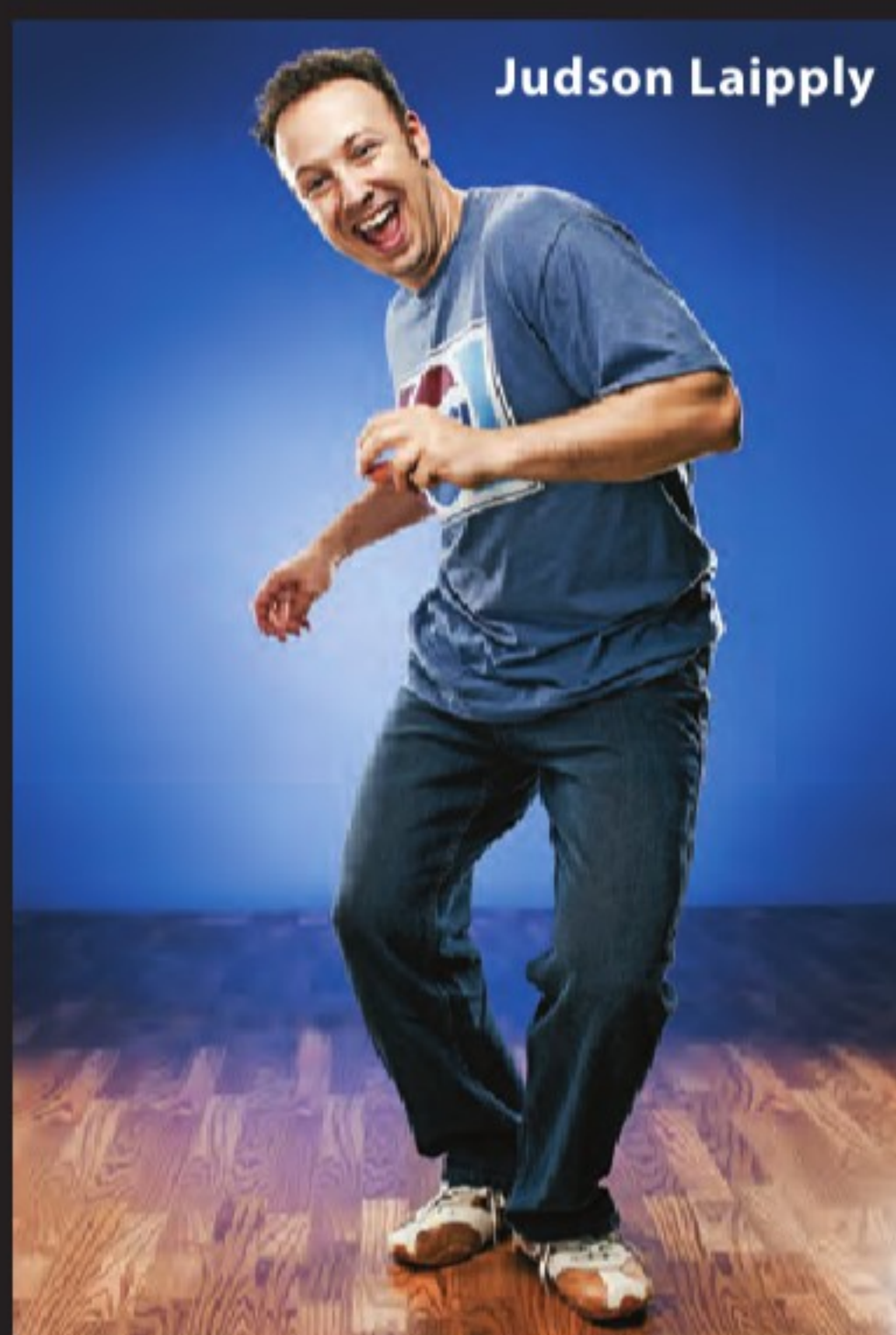


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Jon Acuff



Judson Laipply



Dayna Steele

## Come to Vegas and Quit Your Day Job, Find Your Inner Rock Star, Refocus Your Energy...and Benefit from the Best DJ Conference Value

**M**obile Beat again provides an opportunity to learn from the best the industry has to offer, check out the latest gear and business-building products and services, network with peers, and party in classic Vegas style, as our seventeenth DJ event, MBLV17, comes to the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas, February 4-7, 2013.

Come early, enjoy the Super Bowl on February 3 in the atmosphere of Las Vegas!

### TERRIFIC TUESDAY...

Many DJs find that Tuesday's presentations alone are worth the entire trip. The MBLV 2013 Triple All Star lineup is without a doubt, our best ever!

People say, "Don't quit the day job..." But maybe you'd love to! **Jon Acuff**, author of *Quitter*, will show you how to "blow up your dream without blowing up your life." In 2010, Jon closed the gap between his day job and his dream job when he joined the Dave Ramsey team to become a full-time author and national speaker on a variety of subjects.

Jon is followed by the entertaining and inspirational **Judson Laipply** and "The Evolution of Dance!" You're a Mobile DJ...you know who we're talking about. Maybe you didn't know his name...maybe you didn't know he's also an awesome speaker, but one thing's for sure: You know his viral video, which has received over 200 MILLION views. His stories, personal experiences, crowd participation, high energy and laughter will move you to let go of the things beyond your control and focus your energy on things you can change. His presentation will, of course, include a live performance of "The Evolution of Dance."

We'll wrap up the day with a session designed to help you "find your inner rock star" and build your "stage" for success! In "A Pep Talk from the DeeJay Booth!" join **Dayna Steele** as she spins your

Rock Star Playlist of Success, including her stories, pictures and lessons learned from the Rolling Stones, Aerosmith, Lady Gaga, Gene Simmons, Van Halen and many more. Take your crowd-pleasing entertainment to the next level with this popular success consultant, *FastCompany* blogger and author of *101 Ways to Rock Your World: What I Learned about Success from the World's Greatest Rock Stars*. For almost 20 years, Dayna was the First Lady of Houston Rock Radio, on KLOL. On the air, across the stage and in the dressing rooms, Dayna rubbed shoulders with and interviewed plenty of rock icons. She is now a speaker, author, entrepreneur, and a social media evangelist as well as a Hall of Fame radio personality.

### ...AND MUCH MORE!

The other three days include presentations by **John Rozz, Jason Weldon, Tom Haibeck, Jeff and Stephanie Padovani, Alan Dodson, Robbie Britton, Ben Stowe and many, many more**. With bonus seminars added on Monday afternoon for early arrivals, it's non-stop action at MBLV17. Meet up with old friends and new at another annual Monday night "Decade" Welcome Party with MC Johnny Rozz. The 2013 theme will be "I've Got the Power", with music and fun looking back to the 1990s.

On Tuesday night, don't miss the legendary **American DJ Customer Appreciation Party**, and on Wednesday, Mobile Beat presents the voice of **Foreigner, Lou Gramm** and The Lou Gramm Band. **Rob Base** of "It Takes Two" fame will also appear on the exhibit hall stage.

All that, AND three days to wander amongst the vendors in the Mobile Beat exhibit hall and get the hottest deals on the latest in DJ technology. It all adds up to the best value for your conference dollar. **MB**

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**Hyper Bar 843 RGB**  
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# It's Only Rock & Roll... But I Like It

LIKE THE STONES, ROCK KEEPS ROLLING

By Jay Maxwell



We all have a favorite number. Perhaps it's the number seven. That number seems lucky. Perhaps the number sixteen comes to mind. That number seems sweet. My favorite number is 33. The speed of a record album spinning around on a turntable, the needle in the groove, transmitting the sounds embedded in the vinyl into vibrations that will flow through speakers eventually reaching my ears so I can experience the music. Often clients ask me what is my favorite type of music. Usually, I state that I like all genres of music and then take the conversation elsewhere to avoid any conflict. The truth is, rock & roll is my first love.

When I think of my favorite number, I think about rock & roll. I remember the days of buying the entire album, opening the seal, and carefully laying the LP on the turntable before placing the needle on the first track and then watching the spinning disc revolve around until every song on side one was complete. Then the joy of turning the album over to see what treasures side two had to offer. It seemed magical how a shiny twelve inch flat piece of vinyl could contain the information to rock my world. My first album was Elton John's *Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy*. The cover alone was enough to keep any sixteen year old boy's mind busy for days. But the music inside was incredible. I played the LP over and over. As I write this article, that very LP is taking another spin on my turntable. In so many ways, I miss the days of the turntable.

Things have certainly changed. But at least rock & roll is still alive and well and can still bring a party to life. Many times at an event someone will walk up to the DJ table and will simply request "some rock & roll." Even with thirty years in the business, I still ask them what they mean by "rock & roll." Sure, it's my favorite type of music, but since that term has been used for popular music since the early 1950s, I always inquire further to see exactly what they want. I've had some people reply that they

wanted The Beach Boys while others wanted Dave Matthews. Both are rock & roll, but very different. Others have said they wanted Madonna or Prince—two artists that I don't associate with rock & roll, but many do.

In creating this issue's list, I asked myself the question: What precisely would *most* people consider rock & roll? Naturally, the songs in the list had to also be danceable. The songs had to have a powerful beat and had to move you out of your seat. The songs couldn't be too "pop" sounding or too polished. They had to have that good old fashion sound associated with The Rolling Stones, Bob Seger, or The Steve Miller Band. Most of this issue's songs ruled the airwaves during the 1970s and 80s. Fortunately, they have survived beyond those days when they played on turntables and regardless of the mechanism generating the sound, they still deliver a force like none other.

One of my favorite groups, The Who, sing a song called "Long Live Rock." While that song didn't make the top 50 it certainly could be the anthem for the list. This issue contains the songs that still live on and are sure fire winners to mix in during the night when the crowd wants a good dose of rock & roll to move their feet. Another one of my favorite groups, and one that did make the list several times is The Rolling Stones. They started calling themselves "The World's Greatest Rock & Roll Band" in the late 1960s. Mick Jagger and Keith Richards formed the Stones in 1962 and they are still rocking today. Since this year marks their 50th anniversary, we honor their milestone by featuring the top 50 rocking rock & roll songs. Just for good measure, it also contains the top 25 slow tunes that are great crowd pleasers for those who want to slow dance, but still want the song to be a rock standard.

Don't get me wrong, I truly do love all types of music. Just the other day I was speaking on the phone with a father of a bride who was my age and he was amazed that I keep up with all of today's music as well as music from the past 75 years. For someone to consider themselves well educated, they should be well read—reading books on a wide variety of subjects. Likewise, an experienced mobile disc jockey should be well educated on the many different genres of music. It continues to be a pleasure for me to research the different types of music that will get and keep people on the dance floor. On those rare occasions when I'm a guest at a party though, it will be the songs on this list that I would want to hear when I approach the DJ and request that he "Play Something That We Can Dance To!" **MB**

Mobile Beat's resident musicologist since 1992 (issue #11), Jay Maxwell runs the multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell's Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, South Carolina. He is also a professor of Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients' requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, *Play Something We Can Dance To*.



# Long Live Rock

	SONG TITLE	ARTIST	YEAR	BPM
1	OLD TIME ROCK & ROLL	BOB SEGER	79	126
2	YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG	AC/DC	80	128
3	BROWN EYED GIRL	VAN MORRISON	67	150
4	SWEET HOME ALABAMA	LYNYRD SKYNYRD	74	100
5	MONY MONY	BILLY IDOL	87	136
6	POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME	DEF LEPPARD	88	85
7	LIVIN' ON A PRAYER	BON JOVI	87	122
8	WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU	ROMANTICS	80	160
9	SATISFACTION (I Can't Get No)	ROLLING STONES	65	138
10	BLACK BETTY	RAM JAM	77	122
11	ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST	QUEEN	80	110
12	WALK THIS WAY	AEROSMITH	77	110
13	START ME UP	ROLLING STONES	81	122
14	HURTS SO GOOD	JOHN MELLENCAMP	82	126
15	I LOVE ROCK AND ROLL	JOAN JETT	82	95
16	MY SHARONA	KNACK	79	148
17	BAD MOON RISING	CCR	69	179
18	ADDICTED TO LOVE	ROBERT PALMER	86	112
19	JOKER	STEVE MILLER BAND	73	83
20	PRETTY WOMAN	ROY ORBISON	64	128
21	KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF	GEORGIA SATELLITES	87	115
22	SHARP DRESSED MAN	ZZ TOP	83	126
23	HOT LEGS	ROD STEWART	78	114
24	JUMP	VAN HALEN	84	130
25	SLEDGEHAMMER	PETER GABRIEL	86	98
26	GIMME THREE STEPS	LYNYRD SKYNYRD	75	135
27	ROCK 'N ME	STEVE MILLER BAND	75	121
28	SWEET CHILD OF MINE	GUNS N' ROSES	87	125
29	DOMINO	VAN MORRISON	70	130
30	NEED YOU TONIGHT	INXS	88	109
31	GOT MY MIND SET ON YOU	GEORGE HARRISON	87	150
32	SUMMER OF '69	BRYAN ADAMS	85	139
33	GLORY DAYS	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN	85	118
34	POWER OF LOVE	HUEY LEWIS & THE NEWS	85	119
35	COCAINE	ERIC CLAPTON	77	106
36	BROWN SUGAR	ROLLING STONES	71	128
37	ALL SUMMER LONG	KID ROCK	2008	103
38	SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO	CLASH	83	114
39	BAD TO THE BONE	GEORGE THOROGOOD	83	99
40	END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW	REM	87	206

41	ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL	PINK FLOYD	80	105
42	TAKIN' CARE OF BUSINESS	BACHMAN-TURNER OVERDRIVE	74	130
43	BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE	TALKING HEADS	83	103
44	ALL SHE WANTS TO DO IS DANCE	DON HENLEY	85	116
45	BORN TO BE WILD	STEPPENWOLF	68	146
46	LONG COOL WOMAN (IN A BLACK DRESS)	HOLLIES	72	132
47	ROLL WITH IT	STEVE WINWOOD	88	118
48	TUFF ENUFF	FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS	86	116
49	CHINA GROVE	DOOBIE BROTHERS	73	144
50	LET'S DANCE	DAVID BOWIE	83	115

## Rollin' It Slow

	SONG TITLE	ARTIST	YEAR
1	WONDERFUL TONIGHT	ERIC CLAPTON	78
2	HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY	VAN MORRISON	89
3	OPEN ARMS	JOURNEY	82
4	I DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING	AEROSMITH	98
5	IN YOUR EYES	PETER GABRIEL	86
6	INTO THE MYSTIC	VAN MORRISON	70
7	CRAZY LOVE	VAN MORRISON	70
8	WE'VE GOT TONIGHT	BOB SEGER	79
9	TUPELO HONEY	VAN MORRISON	71
10	ANGEL EYES	JEFF HEALEY	89
11	FAITHFULLY	JOURNEY	83
12	YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND	JAMES TAYLOR	71
13	TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT	EAGLES	76
14	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE	BILLY JOEL	78
15	YOUR SONG	ELTON JOHN	71
16	COLOUR MY WORLD	CHICAGO	71
17	WILD HORSES	ROLLING STONES	71
18	BABY, I LOVE YOUR WAY	PETER FRAMPTON	76
19	BEST OF MY LOVE	EAGLES	75
20	HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE	BEATLES	66
21	I'LL BE	EDWIN McCAIN	97
22	FOOLED AROUND AND FEEL IN LOVE	ELVIN BISHOP	76
23	YOU ARE SO BEAUTIFUL	JOE COCKER	75
24	DESPERADO	EAGLES	73
25	SEA OF LOVE	HONEYDRIPPERS	85



# Your Last Song is Their First Memory

HOW TO LEAVE 'EM WANTING MORE

By Matt Blank

**H**ow many times have you seen that look of disappointment in guests' faces when you announce that "we only have time for one more song tonight, so please join us on the dance floor..." That simple expression can be caused by a few different factors. The most important reason is that the crowd is sad to see the party end and is left wanting more.

Our goal as DJs is to make the guests feel that they do not want to go home and they do not want to go back to their lives. They want to stay on this dance floor and party until they cannot party anymore. We have removed them from all of their stresses and all of their problems and allowed them to release their inner child.

The importance of selecting a great last song is exactly like the last scene in a great movie. When that last scene is unfolding you're left sitting at the edge of your chair wanting one more scene. Then, the diabolical producers of Hollywood break your dreams and hopes when they begin to roll the credits as you sit in disbelief, contemplating your feelings.

There are numerous ways to end an event and select a last song; however it is up to us to help our clients select that perfect song which leaves their guests saying, "This was the best event I've ever been to." In my opinion, the definition of being a great DJ is to manipulate the crowd's energy throughout an event, through the music that is played and the order it's played in. Further, we should be leading the guests through a series of peaks and valleys that ultimately end at the top of a mountain with a climax of built-up energy. Experiencing the last 3-4 minutes of an event together, with a shared emotion is what leaves the crowd with a great last impression.



## WHICH VIBE TO PICK?

There are three types of final songs to suggest to your clients. The first is the slow, meaningful song that repre-

sents the guest(s) of honor and what's important to them. This one typically is not the most popular as it ends the event on a more subdued (but sometimes romantic) note. For a wedding, it can be similar to a first dance, where the couple expresses their love for each other via the lyrics.

The second is an upbeat dance song that ends on a very high note. This can be great for the guests to let all of their energy out and experience the last moment with their adrenaline pumping and their heart rates high. The problem with an upbeat last song is that when the last note hits and there is no music (insert cricket noise here), the guests are left with nothing more to do but now exit in the over-abundant silence that is the ballroom.

The last, and most popular way to end an event is to select a song that everyone can sing together and have a shared experience—otherwise known as the sing-along. Any song that causes people to put their left arm wrapped around someone and use their right arm to raise their glass is the perfect one to select. This creates a "we're all in this together" mentality, where the former stranger that was the person sitting next to them at dinner is now their best friend. Alcohol can, of course, play a small role in this last song approach, but it's really the programming of the whole event, culminating in the great final sing-along that makes everyone feel like rock stars at the same time.

No matter which option your client goes with, your job is to arm them with all of the options and help them decide how they'd like to end their event. Just like that great movie's last scene, the client wants their last song to be the most memorable part of their event, leaving the guests wanting more. So the next time you get the "One more song, one more song!" chant, you'll know that you really rocked it. **MB**

*Matt Blank is a DJ and the Production Sales Manager at Synergetic Sounds in Philadelphia (<http://synergeticsounds.com>). Starting his entertainment career during high school as a dancer for a DJ company, he went on to cultivate his natural talent for mixing music and emceeing while at Millersville University. Matt has been published in Philadelphia Brides Magazine and was a speaker the 2012 Mobile Beat DJ Show in Las Vegas.*



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# Where Do You Live?

## ARE YOU MASTER OF YOUR ENTERTAINMENT DOMAIN?

By Mike Ficher

**N**o, not your residence, of course. When you are serving at an event, where do you live?

Do you live only in the world available—the banquet room, the hotel, the museum, the park—or do you live in the world that you and the client would like to create for the event and for the guests?

Are you a metaphorical slave of the console, content to play the music, execute the announcements, lead games, orchestrate activities, and provide a memorable audio experience for your clients? Or are you free to explore a new world?

### A BRAVE NEW WORLD

"Theatre is a place where fiction and reality come together to problematize each other. . . The tension between the two is always present, and, indeed, it can be argued that it is precisely the dual presence of the real and the not real that is constitutive of theatre," writes Gay McAuley in *Space in Performance: Making Meaning in the Theatre*.

How real are the events that we service? How many brides want to create a fairy tale kingdom for at least a few hours on their memorable day? Indeed, isn't the typical mobile event a "place where fiction and reality come together"? Are we not producing a form of theatre?

If so, location and space can become allies for the mobile entertainer who views his work as theatre rather than just entertainment?

### CIRCLE OF LIFE

In the last ten years, I've ventured far beyond the mobile business complex to explore many different forms of entertainment. I served as a sportscaster for a local radio station, calling high school football and basketball games for four years and summer college baseball games for three years. In those situations, I provided eyes for the listener, so I placed critical emphasis on describing the scene in vivid detail.

Before the opening kickoff, I shared the colors of each team's uniforms—black cleats, blue socks with yellow horizontal stripes, blue pants with yellow and white piping, white shirts with blue sanserif



numerals with yellow outline, blue helmets with a yellow interlocked CC on each side and a yellow faceguard.

I described the weather—45 degrees, wind blowing out of the northeast at 10 miles per hour, gray, overcast skies with only spotted patches of blue in the northeast, chance of rain about 20% at kickoff.

Before each play, I shared the formations—offense in a double wing, lone receiver split to the right; defense in a 5-2 with the safeties within four yards of the line of scrimmage.

Why did I emphasize such detail? I want to allow the listeners to "see" the action in their minds. I wanted the listener to see the linebacker in the black uniform top hitting the running back wearing the white top. I wanted the listener to feel as much as possible that they were at the stadium watching the game. Since many listeners had probably been in the stadium where the game was being played, I could play off that knowledge to create the moment for them.

Do you help transport your guests to another "location"? You may be in a banquet room at a hotel, but can you convert that, in the guests' minds, into a magical place?



Mobile DJ, dance instructor, emcee, voice actor, writer, teacher, and improv comedian, Mike Ficher owns and operates Dance Express, based in Bend, Oregon. A three-time presenter and host at Mobile Beat conventions, Mike has been expanding the public's definition of mobile entertainer since 1986.

### A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR

I love to play golf. Not well, mind you, but I enjoy the challenge of the sport. But, I detest riding a cart. Why?

I love to walk a course, to feel the grass, to mentally develop the next shot from what I see and feel around me as I walk up the fairway. I need to feel the undulations of the fairway, the idiosyncracies of nature, to see how a hole is shaped and might be best played.

In addition to sportscasting, during the last three-plus years I've appeared in six local community theater stage productions. Actors are responsible for their own props. Before each show, I reviewed my wardrobe and ensured that my props were available and ready.

In addition, if time permitted, I walked around all points of the stage and to the various seating locations in the theatre. How does the guest in the back of the room see the stage? Will the person sitting stage right miss something in a scene? How does the view appear from the center of the theatre?

Walk your room. Do blind spots exist where guests may not be able to see you? Acoustically, how does the sound reverberate? Like the golf course, get a feel for the space, the floor, the carpet, the acoustics.

Use the room. Which wall that might be a reference point? What materials available in the room can you use? What points can you venture to within the room to exploit the available lighting for different views?

Energize the room. According to Kyle Mackie, in a presentation on space, "SPACE is charged with ENERGY. Space shrinks and expands." What energy is your room sharing with you?

"Theater, as distinct from other dramatic media, is essentially a relationship between performer, spectator, and the space in which both come together," Gay Auley notes in her book. In the world of mobile entertainment, we draw from the world of theatre and benefit by using space and location creatively for our audiences' enjoyment. So, where do you live? **ME**





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# No Such Thing as a Bad Location!

GAME SHOWS MAKE ANY PLACE A SETTING FOR FUN

By Rob Johnson

**W**hen I heard the main topic for this issue of *Mobile Beat* was LOCATION, I really struggled to come up with something. I kept going back to the same thought... "There is NO such thing as a 'bad location!'" That's when it hit me. That was going to be the theme of this article.

## GEAR THAT GOES ANYWHERE

DigiGames has a lot of different portable wireless models that really can make it easy to set up and do trivia anywhere. I have performed in private residences, at pool parties, in small hotel conference rooms, schools, churches, camps and many more locations. It doesn't take a huge amount of space. All it takes is a room or area with some fun people, and you are ready to go.

Of course it hasn't always been this way. When I bought my first game show system over 12 years ago, it was HUGE. It took a lot of room to store and also to utilize it. I had fun with it and made some really good money; but it just seemed like a lot of work. Now I can set up anywhere in 10 minutes or less, and store my systems in a small case. Even DigiGames' marquee



system, The V-Station, is very compact, while containing the newest technology. It is about a quarter of the size of my first game show system.

## PICK A PLACE

Another thought on location is where and when to do these fun shows. I know my column is on Midweek Money, so let's focus on that. My good friend, and fellow DigiGames believer, Keith Alan, is just winding up his whirlwind summer of Campardy (Camp plus Jeopardy), his trademark event, which he performed DAILY for a couple of months. I am not sure of the numbers, but I think he does about 60 of them in a two-month period—all MIDWEEK. (Talk about MIDWEEK MONEY—maybe HE should be writing this article.) He goes to camps and provides great entertainment for the kids...and makes a ton of money doing it.

Personally, corporate gigs are my favorite. There are lots of trainings and conferences held during the week. I pitch these as "Educational Opportunities" or TEAM BUILDING activities. Companies don't have money for "entertainment" but I can get them to pay top dollar if they feel it is going to motivate their sales force or staff. It is all in the timing and location. Find the right person and show them what you can do for them and they will fall all over themselves to get you to do their event.

Schools are all around you. They don't pay the best, but if you are available on a Tuesday from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM, why not put two or three-hundred in your pocket? It isn't competing with your bread and butter weekend nights. There are churches all around you as well. Clean, family-oriented entertainment is tough

to come by. Pitch them on your G-rated entertainment for congregational events.

Bars and Clubs are my least favorite locations to perform in. I just don't like drunks very much. In my opinion, they are the toughest participants to deal with. I have made a good deal of money from these establishments over the years, but the older I get, the pickier I am about these bookings. If you do karaoke in bars, then you would probably love doing game shows as well. You also have a built-in customer base and let's face it—there are a lot of bars looking to build their business.

Nursing homes, assisted living facilities and retirement communities are also great locations to perform in. I guarantee you will NEVER have a more appreciative audience. The older generation LOVES their game shows. These shows really don't pay much money, but the feeling you get for brightening the day of these senior citizens is well worth it. (I told Keith Alan he should market this concept to this demographic and combine Retirement Centers with Jeopardy. He didn't think the name would flow as well as CAMPARDY... go figure.)

When it comes to physical location we all want to be the center of attention. The nice thing about doing trivia or game shows is that you can bring the center of attention to your customer. Set up in a small space if necessary, and take the game show to them.

As always, if you have any feedback, feel free to contact me at [rob@digigames.com](mailto:rob@digigames.com). I love hearing from those of you who get inspired by this article in each issue. It is easy for me to write because it is about one of my passions. Making money—MIDWEEK MONEY! **MB**



Rob Johnson has hosted Trivia Parties and Game Shows for over 10 years. He is the current spokesperson for DigiGames and uses their equipment exclusively. He has performed throughout the United States, Europe and the Caribbean. Rob is also the owner of The

Music Man, Inc. and performs comedy stage hypnosis shows as The Hypno Man. He has also presented his "Midweek Money" seminar at multiple conferences and conventions including Mobile Beat, WEDJ, Wedding MBA, WedPro2011, ArmDJs, and various ADJA events. If you would like Rob to speak at your local event or demonstrate DigiGames gear to your group, contact him at 701-710-1657 or [rob@digigames.com](mailto:rob@digigames.com).



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# GET SET FOR GREAT SOUND

**SPECIFIC SOUND  
SETUP SOLUTIONS**

By Stu Chisholm

Back in the March 2011 issue of *Mobile Beat* I outlined the basics of speaker placement and how a room can affect sound in an article called "Location, Location, Location." I spoke of how echo can sometimes be cancelled out by simply angling speakers toward an imaginary point on the opposite wall, how subwoofer power can be maximized with acoustic coupling, and how all speakers can sound better by paying attention to the basics of sound.

Even though I've written on some other fairly controversial topics, this article is the one I still receive more calls and e-mails about than any other! So today I'd like to take a moment to apply these basics to a few typical mobile setups and show how I solved some of the sound problems encountered with each.

## **SMALL INDOOR VENUES: AVOID BIG FAIL**

With smaller parties ruling the mobile roost in the lower Michigan area, I've seen a whole lot more of the smaller venues recently. While these venues, in general, are usually the easiest to play, they can also be the hardest in which to correct sound problems when they rear their ugly heads.

If you're like me, you usually arrive at the hall to find an area that has been set aside for the DJ. Assuming you've discussed your concerns with the venue staff ahead of time and there are no obstacles or other placement problems, then you start out with your set-up routine, placing your gear for maximum visual impact (or perhaps the opposite, if you're trying for a more discreet "white glove" approach). This becomes our first area of compromise: appearance vs. good sound. What looks good to the eye doesn't always sound good to the ear. Before cords are taped down and the rig dressed up, this is the time to fire up the system, put on a familiar piece of music and let your ears be the judge. Even if you plan on using pink noise to create a sound profile, do an "ear audition" first. There is no better piece of test gear than the human ear.

The upside of the small venue is that echo is seldom a problem. The bigger enemy is the unnaturally boomy, brassy or tinny sound that can result from speakers being packed too close together. Too much bass? Just move any subwoofer(s) away from the corners and walls. Each surface you move away from drops the perceived volume by half. High/mid cabinets on tripods should have a bit of side-to-side latitude to move just in case there's any frequency cancellation happening. You can actually see it by using a spectrum analyzer. Run the pink noise first on one side, then on the other, noting the level of each frequency. (Be careful! Pink noise at high volume will kill your speakers.) Then, bring up both together. If the analyzer shows a drop in any frequencies, you know you have some speaker moving or EQ tweaking to do.

## **NOT A COMMERCIAL...REALLY**

While I'm normally not one of the Bose brand choir, I must say that their L1 Line Array speakers are ideal for a smaller venue, not to mention much easier to make "vanish" into the background. Many of the frequency cancellation effects and coloration issues are eliminated or minimized due to their construction. Looking a bit like a pole, you can even use a single speaker for those really tiny venues. Their B1 bass module should suffice for most small events, but I tend to prefer a more traditional subwoofer, such as a Mackie or my old Yorkville standby, when the guest count rises.



## LARGE INDOOR VENUE: SPACE CASE

When the room expands, so must your sound. There are two common approaches:

1. Placing bigger speakers/speaker arrays at the front of the house (on the stage area).
2. Spreading the sound through the venue using smaller speakers.

Assuming your event is something like a traditional wedding reception, your aim will be to focus the biggest sound on the dance floor, but you will also want everyone to hear your music and announcements everywhere in the building. I solved this problem by setting up my standard rig/speakers in their usual position next to the dance floor, treating it as if it was the whole building. Then I strategically placed a row of active speakers down each wall of the venue all the way to the back. They were linked by an improvised wireless system so that long runs of cable wouldn't be needed. (See sidebar on page 22.)

By aiming the front-of-house speakers toward a single point on the back wall and running the volume much lower on the satellite speakers (on their own output with a separate volume control), I could keep the volume at reasonable "talk" levels in the periphery even as the volume was cranked-up on the dance floor.

Another way to spread sound through a big venue is to hijack their own in-ceiling PA. Using a direct box, an auxiliary output on a mixer can be converted into a mono XLR output. You can then run plain ol' mic cable to the nearest microphone wall jack. Once you convince the venue to turn on their system, your announcements and music will then be piped throughout the entire venue. This is especially helpful if the venue's system feeds the bathrooms and lobbies where bridal party members tend to gather. Just take care when you do this, because most 70-volt in-ceiling speaker systems are not made for dance volume! Turn down the "house" when you crank up the dance floor.

## MOVIN' OUT!

When playing outdoor events, you trade one set of problems for another. Unless there are walls and buildings nearby, gone are the pesky echo issues. Gone are the boomy, muddy bass artifacts caused by the venue's construction. Instead, raw power becomes an issue, since the outdoors tends to eat decibels for lunch. There's seldom such a thing as too much power.

## THE GREAT OUTDOORS (SMALL GROUP)

Parties held in tents can usually be treated much like those in a regular building, with the main exception being the lack of any kind of bass boost offered by the tent's "walls." Where a small single sub would normally do, you might decide that a second one, or maybe a slightly beefier subwoofer is in order. You'll find that a tent without side walls may not seriously impact the perceived sound power under it.

Take away the tent and all of that changes. Even mids/highs sound about half as loud as they did in the tent and bass becomes very difficult to hear. The issue of "throw" is now apparent; speakers need to be pushed twice as hard for half the sound. For the smaller outdoor backyard party, simply cranking up the power a bit might do the trick. Once again, though, I'm a fan of using more speakers rather than bigger ones. An extra sub and two extra high/mid cabinets should be able to solve most issues.

**Even if you plan on using pink noise to create a sound profile, do an "ear audition" first. There is no better piece of test gear than the human ear.**



## THE GREATER OUTDOORS (LARGE GROUP)

When the wide open spaces get even wider and need to be covered by sound, your entire strategy might have to change. Speaker cabinets that aren't normally suited to indoor events because of their ability to throw sound now make perfect sense. If you've ever been to an outdoor concert, you no doubt noticed the flying arrays and rows of bass bins designed to get sound out into a large area.

For the biggest outdoor parties we're likely to encounter, DJs again can consider the same two strategies. If bigger speakers on the stage is your preference, then renting two or more bass cabinets such as the EAW SB1000 dual 18" concert speakers and four or more EAW KF760 3-way cabinets, not to mention a rack full of huge amps to push 'em all is your best bet. Or, you can use the same strategy as described for the large indoor venue.

That's what I did one summer when I was invited to act as the DJ and emcee for a huge car cruise. Classic cars would cover the entire parking lot of a strip mall, and the bar hosting the cruise wanted sound throughout the lot and spilling out onto the sidewalk and the street beyond. As I had done in the massive indoor hall, I put my main rig at the staging area near the bar's entrance, where trophies and prizes would be awarded, and then positioned active speakers along the entire strip, out around the perimeter of the parking lot and along the sidewalk. It took a total of 18 active Mackie speakers, fed by wireless transmitters, their placement made just a bit easier because of the electrical outlets at the base of the lot's numerous lighting poles which the bar owner made sure were turned on for the event. Anywhere you walked in the lot, there was smooth, even sound and even decent stereo separation! (And yes, before you e-mail me, I definitely had to RENT all of those Mackies as well as the extra wireless receivers.) It remains the largest cruise I've ever done by myself.

## STANDING ON CEREMONY

Most mobile DJs have the occasional bride and groom ask if they can provide a PA system for their wedding ceremony,

which is usually at a different location than their reception. Again, the rules change because the goals here are different. Even though these often take place outdoors, the concerns of ample bass and speaker throw are replaced by the need for clear announcements, multiple live microphones and a PA system that will not be obtrusive, especially if it is captured in photographs. It is tempting to simply pick up one of the all-in-one PA systems such as the Peavey Escort or the Fender Passport, since the speakers and stands are small (and therefore discreet), and they can handle multiple microphones, which are needed during wedding ceremonies.

Truth be told, these are excellent for most small to mid-sized wedding ceremonies. Always concerned with better sound, however, I decided to build a ceremony system around a specific pair of speakers: the Mackie SRM-350s. These are a bit smaller than the SRM-450s used by many mobile DJs worldwide, yet have a surprisingly good bass response and a bit more power for bigger ceremonies. A small console containing a mixer, flash drive player and wireless mic 4-pack complete the system, supported by a keyboard stand. The system is all in black, and I also have a white drape and stand skirts, allowing it to blend into just about any décor. Set up in the back of the room or behind the wedding guests, the ability to be heard clearly but not seen satisfies the goals of a great wedding ceremony system.

## GOOD SOUND AIN'T NO ACCIDENT... MOST OF THE TIME

As much as we know technically, the real world often confronts us with exceptions to nearly every rule. The trick for the professional DJ is to learn as much about good sound as possible... and then be ready to adapt when circumstances show us that what we know doesn't always work. The best data comes from experience, and I hope mine will prove useful to you and your business. If you have any real world knowledge on getting better sound that you would like to share, please feel free to send me your story (DJStuCrew@gmail.com) and I'll include the best ones in future articles. Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**

# WHAT'S UP WITH WIRELESS?

To paraphrase John Lennon: "Imagine there's no cables. It's easy if you try." When I need to cover a large area with sound using several speakers, speaker cable obviously creates a huge mess. The system I've used to avoid this was created from two Shure lavalier wireless microphone systems. Using an XLR to mini-XLR adapter, I run a signal from the outputs of my mixer to the transmitter packs, one for each side (right and left channel). The battery-operated receivers are then attached to the active speakers with Velcro®, using another mini to standard XLR adapter. I just had to order several receivers on the same channels (one frequency for right and another for left). Lucky for you, though, time has marched on and you can avoid this primitive (and expensive) method!

A purposely made wireless speaker transmission system, the Phonic WM-SYS4 stereo, will do the same job without all

the XLR adapters for under \$400. (A single-channel mono system is also available.) Or, for just a few bucks more, there's the VocoPro AIR-NET, which boasts 2.4 GHz bandwidth transmission for outstanding sound. Whichever system you go with, extra transmitters can be ordered so that you can expand the number of speakers you can run at the same time.

In the interest of full disclosure, I will say that I have not used either of these systems, so I cannot comment on how well they work. I do know that Phonic debuted their first wireless speaker system about eight years ago or so, making them the most experienced in the field. I've also heard very good things about the VocoPro system both online and from colleagues. Having never had a problem with my improvised Shure system, I can say that it's a viable technology and a good bet that purposely built systems should perform at least as well.



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# Divide and Conquer

UNDERSTANDING PA CONFIGURATIONS CAN HELP YOU BEAT BAD SOUND

By Jake Feldman

**D**uring the years I've been in the business, I have seen a lot of people do a lot of strange and even dangerous things when it comes to sound. Most of the time, those errors are a result of ineptitude when it comes to the science of sound. Commonly, DJs mistake systems for "all-in-one" solutions when they may actually work best for only one application. They fail to realize that perhaps better tools exist that would accomplish the task at hand more efficiently and might even (gasp) sound better.

Let's take a fresh look at some approaches to sound from an event-based perspective.

## WEDDING CEREMONIES

Although it's usually not the responsibility of the mobile DJ, you will inevitably be called upon to provide sound reinforcement for the pre-party portion of a nuptial event, especially if the ceremony is not being held in a house of worship. Sound at a wedding ceremony is two parts audio, two parts aesthetic. Sure, everything needs to be heard, but you also **DO NOT WANT** your system to be seen in the happy couple's photographs. Unless they really love the black drape and road-case look, or were on the road crew for Skynyrd in their wild, pre-marriage, oats-sewing days, get the gear out of the way.

At the bare minimum, a service provider for a normal ceremony should have the following items to produce sound: a live sound mixer (DJ mixer will not do) with at least six channels of XLR Mic/Line input, two wireless lapel mics, a wireless handheld mic, two 1/8" adapter cables (for MP3 players), and a reliable CD player. Of course, it would be ideal to have two identical systems, with one as backup.

Of course, you will need at least one speaker to make sound, and I would recommend a powered speaker of small size (with an 8" or 10" subwoofer). This speaker would preferably be pole-mountable. Sound clarity is also something to think about, which is why I would buy a product from a reputable company and test the system out before you decide to hone your skills on a real (live) wedding.

## WEDDING RECEPTIONS

These events by far are the ones that mobile DJs are known for--and yet some DJs get the idea of sound for a wedding

reception way, way wrong. It does not involve the same kind of racks and stacks necessary for the Rolling Stones to take the stage; it should be something that keeps a low profile and sounds fantastic at the same time. And we're not necessarily talking about the latest and greatest; we're talking about the tried and true. Until someone proves me wrong, I say you can't go wrong with a high-quality pair of 12" or 15" powered speakers on tripods for a wedding reception. I know what you're going to say--that the latest thin line array systems are the way to go, but remember I am all about sound quality first, looks second. And by the way, leave that big burly subwoofer at home--most grandmas don't need their fillings shaken to enjoy the music.

For larger receptions, two more powered speakers may be necessary, and I have performed at up to 600-guest weddings with

just four 12" powered speakers; the key to success being proper placement and knowing when to focus musical energy on the dance floor. Going down the list, the minimum required to properly make sound at a wedding reception would be a pair of 12" or 15" **QUALITY** powered speakers, a **RELIABLE** wireless microphone, your DJ mixer and your media player. Of course, make your "kit" look tidy by keeping your cables neat, masking your equipment with a facade, and keeping as low of a profile as possible.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCES

Here's where we separate weddings from everything else a mobile DJ does. First, it all depends on the atten-

dance and size of that particular middle school. I would arrive with no less than two 15" powered speakers and at least a 15" powered sub. If you must, you can be completely archaic and use unpowered speakers and sub(s) for this application (notice that's the first time I've said that in this article).

The idea of a middle school dance sound is completely opposite of a wedding. At a wedding, especially during the dancing portion of the evening, the sound needs to be centered on the dance floor area. At a middle school, typically the sound needs to be projected to the whole room, because the whole room is a dance floor.

## HIGH SCHOOL DANCES: LESS THAN 500 ATTENDEES

Think of these events as what they are--overgrown middle school dances. Sure, you need more lights (a different article altogether), and yes, you need to play sometimes drastically different music. But, the sound setup is similar. The minimum I would use would





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be two 15" full-range, high-quality tops, and two single 18" subwoofers paired (or a dual 18") in the center of the stage or in the front of the DJ booth (pairing gains 3db of low-frequency boost per coupling of the same subs). It also should be noted that one should never mix types of subs (front loaded, folded horn, side loaded, or cardioid) or sizes—as massive frequency cancellation will occur and you will be left with massive dead spots on your dance floor and intense spots elsewhere. I've been at scene of that kind of disaster, and believe me, it ain't pretty.

### HIGH SCHOOL DANCES: 500 TO 1,000 ATTENDEES

For the bigger HS events, you should ditch the small-scale cabinets and bring in the heavy artillery. Ponder this: If they can't hear you or feel you, you could be the best DJ in the world, but you will never get a return engagement at that school (the name of the game in school dances). This is where line arrays (real

**DJs fail to realize that perhaps better tools exist that would accomplish the task at hand more efficiently and might even (gasp) sound better.**



ones), tri-amped cabinets, power valleys, drive-racks, and power consumption issues come to the fore.

Especially important for this level of dance is the old adage: "If you can't do something right, don't do it at all." I cannot begin to tell you how many schools have contacted us, and paid 3x what they paid their previous DJ, because the guy was a wedding DJ with a free Saturday but no clue about the gig's real requirements.

This is also when you'll find out how your placement of the "stacks" can seriously affect your event. The room's natural acoustics can aide or hinder your sound. Rather than increase the length of this article beyond the printable range, I suggest you check out a book or take a class on live sound.

(Stu Chisholm's accompanying article on speaker setups is also a good place to start. - Ed.)

At the most basic level, I would suggest at least 10 watts of sound per person in attendance as a general rule of thumb. To make a long story even longer get, I would suggest the following to impress your clients with 500- to 1,000-person school dances: at least four high-quality, 1,000-watt-plus (RMS) tops (full-range), and at least four high-quality 1,200-watt or higher dual 18" or 21" subwoofers, in at least two pairs of two for maximum effect. Part of the experience—the "wow" factor, if you will—for these types of events is also the look of the system, which should approach the level of a small concert, in my opinion. This system would give you around 8,800 watts (RMS), which, if placed correctly, would be fairly burly sounding.

### HIGH SCHOOL DANCES: 1,000+ ATTENDEES

Ah, here's where many a DJ runs into trouble—providing walloping sound for 1,000 plus students without going into tons of debt and losing the gig due to overbidding. There are actually two schools of thought on tackling this, and both have their pros and cons.

Before covering them, first and foremost, if you're not ready to take this plunge, don't even try. A local competitor tried this and it hurt the company immensely. In fact, we now have the event and they are nearly out of the school market.

Once you've decided to try you can either rent the gear from a production house or own it. If you choose to rent, remember that it may cost you a bit more at first until you arrive at a point where your relationship with the rental house improves enough to offer you terms (net 30, etc.) or even below-spec pricing. In this case, typically you can either opt to set the system up yourself or pay the fee and have the professionals do it. Either way, charge your client accordingly.

The next option, and this one is my favorite, is to purchase the system. Remember, you are making a 10-year purchase—that's why the price tag is so high. But you can also rent out the system to other DJ companies who may not have the capital to purchase. It may be a dilemma, but the smart money is on purchasing. (I feel so Dave Ramsey right now.)

For these events, the 10-watt per body rule certainly applies, and I would consider the following minimum: six full-range cabinets of at least 1,200 watts each (RMS), and eight subwoofers at at least 1,400 watts each (RMS). This would bring your total watts RMS with this system to 18,400, which would accommodate 1800 students quite nicely (and require more than your mom's station wagon to haul).

In any case, all that power means nothing if you don't know how to properly use it. This kind of setup requires a serious grasp of proper audio concepts beyond the scope of this piece.

### CONCLUSION

The bottom line is that sound is not child's play. Unlike lighting, which has very few absolutes besides color temperature and hue, sound has a plethora of dos and a cornucopia of don'ts all ripe for the picking. Don't leave home without first evaluating your system in relation to the type of event it's intended for, and, for crying' out loud, use the proper gear for the proper gig! **MB**



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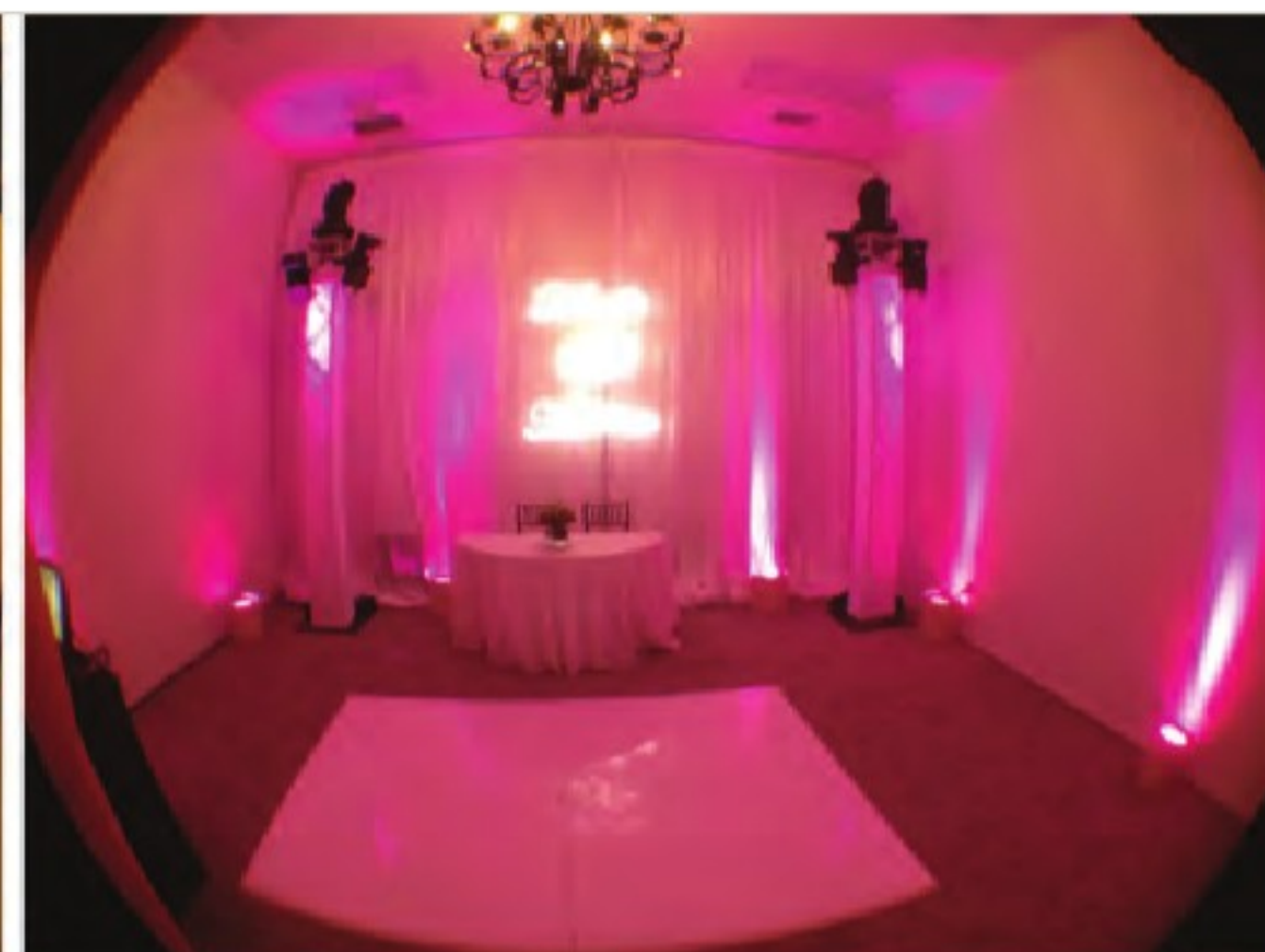
# Making Your Move

A CHANGE OF ADDRESS COULD CHANGE YOUR BOTTOM LINE FOR THE BETTER

By Ryan Burger with Dan Walsh

Is it time for you to “make your move?” While everyone’s situation is different, more often than not, having a dedicated business location separate from one’s home or the local coffee shop will most likely be good for business. Or, if you have been in a storefront for awhile, it might be time to upgrade to a bigger, more impressive location, or to a more accesible site.

Having made the move out of a home-based office and warehouse about five years ago, we know how much of a benefit it has been to our local DJ company and *Mobile Beat*. While we don’t get a lot of visitors related to the magazine, we did start getting more appointments with



potential wedding clients. Previously we had met with most couples at their homes, or occasionally at my home, and stored our gear in our 2-1/2 car home garage.

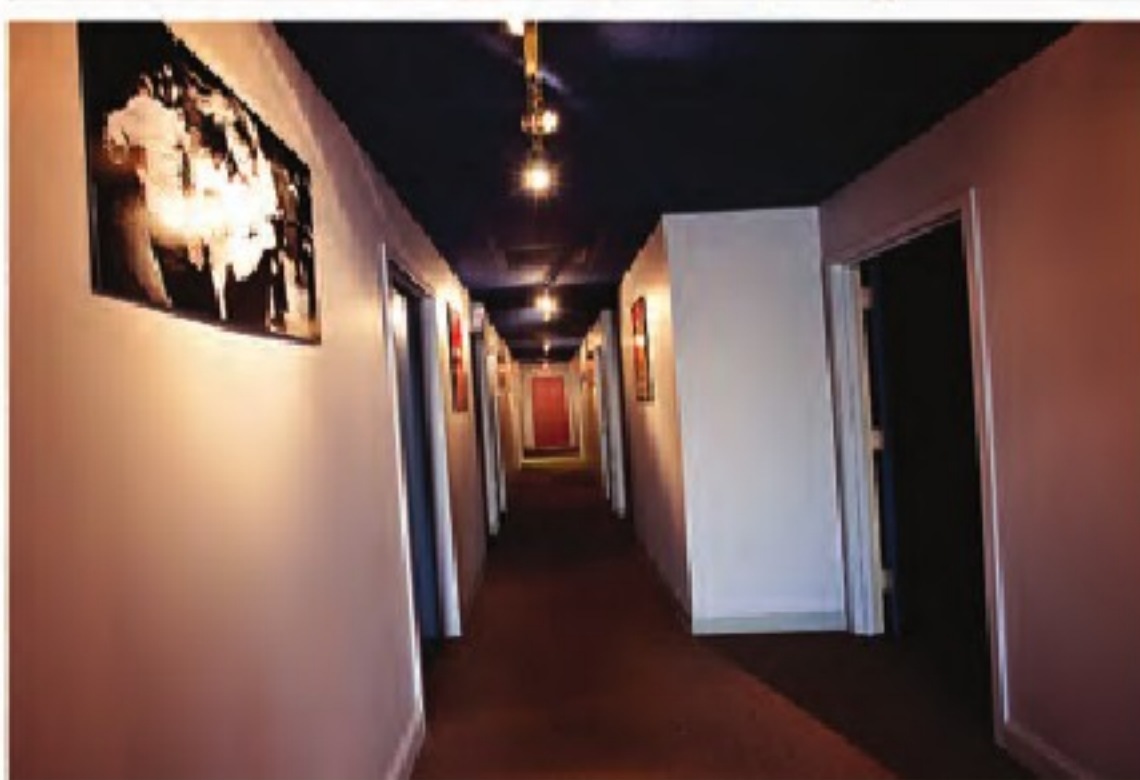
## UPGRADING, RECONFIGURING

Adding employees is a common reason for moving to office space, as it makes managing people, multiple gear setups and sales a lot easier.

In Philadelphia, Jason Weldon’s Synergetic Sound and Lighting moved from an apartment to its first office space with a small warehouse when he got employees. Most recently Synergetic moved into its current facility.

Jason Jani, from New Jersey’s SCE Event Group, has made the move in recent years from home to shared office space to a 1,200-square-foot office space to a 4,200-square-foot loft-style space in a building built in the 1800s. The styling of SCE’s space is amazing, with its exposed ceilings and maple floors. Having a unique place for clients to visit can certainly help make you stand out from the crowd.

(On a personal note, I plan on visiting both Jasons’ facilities before doing final layouts on the 110-year-old building that will become *Mobile Beat* HQ in 2012.)





Sometimes, there is the need to consolidate multiple smaller sites into one central location. Ken Overbey, of Sounds Abound in Naperville, IL (Chicagoland) moved from having gear and office space in four different locations, including retail strip mall space, to one commercial location. Overall, he saw a major increase in business because people instantly could see his company was a real, "brick and mortar" business.

Southern California's J&M Entertainment, helmed by Jorge Lopez, has been in an impressive commercial space for 15 years. Separate sales areas, offices and warehouse are all in one location. The arrangement serves Jorge's business well and has helped them connect with more high-end social clients and larger corporate business clients.

Changing locations can be challenging, but it is worth the effort for most companies. John Rozz, from Sound Spectrum of Connecticut, found that one of his biggest headaches of moving between two offices was the time it took to move everything physically. Of course his operation is on a larger scale than most, involving an actual club onsite (and all the headaches of owning a "public assembly" type of space that come with it).

### DEMONSTRATE, SEPARATE

Even with the challenges, the DJs we spoke with stuck to one consistent theme when asked why they decided to move or



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upgrade their locations: demonstrating professionalism. People just want to see something solid. And related to this is the separation of home and business. Imagine the difference between a nice Mexican restaurant and a converted RV kitchen that serves out of a window along the street. Basically the same food in general, but a ton difference in the presentation. Your clients will see the difference!

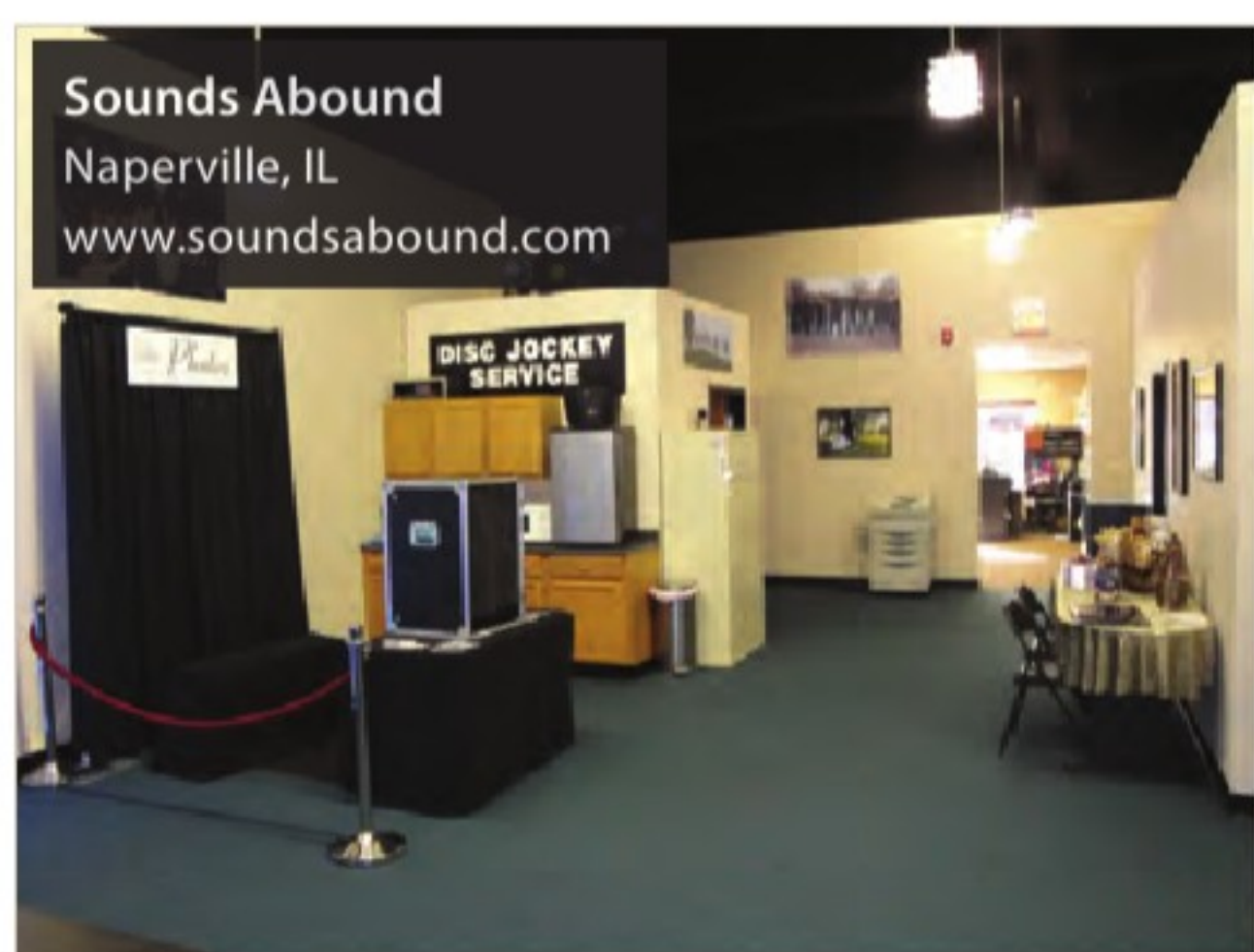
Weldon expresses it well: "I couldn't have multiple sets of clients and employees at my home...that just didn't feel comfortable"

Lopez emphasized another part of the home vs. office divide: "I actually GO HOME." It's also about a separation of your business from your personal life. While it's not always possible to keep that line solid, as the entrepreneur that you are, some physical separation does help.

### ATMOSPHERE, ENVIRONMENT

While some companies, like J&M in California, are able to dedicate rooms for different types of meetings or clients, most depend on having a dedicated office for each salesperson and a demonstration area with DJ rigs, uplighting and other services, all set in the scene. This puts the customer at ease, as Overbey explains. "They see what they are going to get."

Having a receptionist or at least someone who isn't working appointments (especially in the evening) is essential to making clients comfortable. Cold bottled water, sodas and other goodies are also good to have on hand. Even something as simple as a well-cared-for restroom should not be overlooked, when you approach things from the clients point of view. Don't skimp on furniture,



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## “Having a place to show our prospective customers what we offer has increased our sales and especially our upsells” —Ken Overbey

especially the desks and couches where you will directly interact with your clients.

### ORGANIZATION, OPTIMIZATION

On a basic level, having dedicated space

the impression of a bigger operation.

John Rozz points out the power of having the warehouse adjacent to sales space, in that you can show prospects how the show might work; for instance, how a



for both sales and gear helps streamline business. For multi-ops it can help get the team's gear sorted out and set up more efficiently, while creating a more comfortable sales area. For the solo operator, keeping things in one location but in separate areas within it can help project

rented upswell plasma screen would be mounted and dressed at the event. He says, “While most customers don't care as much about the tools you use to accomplish their dreams, it sure can sell them on it when you show them the final look and benefit of your services.”

One of the unanticipated benefits of moving that Jason Weldon discovered during his two moves is that it forces you to clean up and get organized. I know when BCP/Mobile Beat made its latest moved we dumped alot of junk. Jorge feels also that having the office and warehouse attached to each other is “crucial for us not only for efficient communication and process clarity but also for our culture. It's important for our team to feel... like a team.”

### COUNTING COSTS

When it comes to paying for the space, be prepared, and also expect the unexpected. Tough to do, but leaving yourself 20% buffer room in your facilities budget should be about right. This needs to be for both the one-time cost of the move, and the monthly recurring costs. By doing a full cost analysis and talking to companies that have made similar moves in your area, you can have everything planned out as much as possible. Most companies choose to rent space first; purchasing may be part of a longer term plan, not a short term thing.

A short list of things to think about: Rent/mortgage payment, taxes on the property, even if renting (standard commercial leases include triple net—look it up), electricity, gas, water, trash, Internet (check availability and costs), insurance, maintenance, including parking lot and common areas responsibilities (make sure it's spelled out as to who is responsible if renting/leasing), telephone system, etc., etc.

### UNANTICIPATED SCORES

“Having a place to show our prospective customers what we offer has increased our sales and especially our upsells,” states Ken Overbey unequivocally. “It makes us stand out from the competition”

Jason Jani wraps things up well: “Having an office can be an expensive endeavor, but it should not scare anyone looking to take their business to the next level...In order to take your business to that level, a dedicated professional workspace is something I feel is mandatory.” **ME**



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# Keeping It All Together

## SHARING SOME IN-HOUSE ORGANIZATIONAL SECRETS

By Jake Feldman and Ryan Burger

**A**s a company grows, its gear arsenal grows—along with the requirements for housing and organizing said gear. BC Productions, the DJ entertainment and event production company affiliated with Mobile Beat, has gone through four generations of gear organization, so we thought that sharing some of the details on how we are dealing with the the latest generation might help or inspire you in your quest for equipment efficiency.

### OUR GENERATIONS

First, a rundown of how our company has evolved is in order:

1. Single-op DJ - organized gear by what was used all the time vs. everything else; stored in a single garage at an apartment.
2. Multi-op DJ 1.0 - Five different DJs and three DJ rigs, all basically universal but shared by everyone; stored in a double wide garage
3. Multi-op DJ 2.0 - Five different DJs, each DJ with unique personal rig, but with liberal borrowing among crew members; stored in a 1200 sq ft warehouse.
4. Multi-op DJ-oriented production company - Eight different DJs that work for us with seven rigs. (Three "temp" DJs share one set of gear—more on that to come.); plus other specialty hardware that everyone draws upon as needed; all stored in the new "Lions Den."

Because of the unique position BC Productions has with *Mobile Beat*, we

have more resources than the average DJ company. But with that extra opportunity comes extra organization: keeping review hardware separate from production and event hardware, gear only used for Mobile Beat DJ Conferences and Tours separate from the primary, and specialty systems like those for our 3XWrestling production team that is kept entirely separate from the main inventory.

We have just finished moving into a new office in a restored landmark building, formerly the Lion's Club and OOOOF hall in Grimes, Iowa. We are currently using approximately 1,200 square feet of warehouse space. While not geared for warehousing like our last rented space (which had high ceilings and a dock type door), we are adapting this much more attractive building for practical use by putting in a large back door, clearing out unnecessary walls, putting in a security system, and

many other improvements.

### SORTING IT ALL OUT

But what it comes down to is that we need to keep our hardware better organized and better inventoried, so we know what is available to us for the weekend's events, as well as further in advance when upselling specialty hardware, such as photo booths, game show hardware and more.

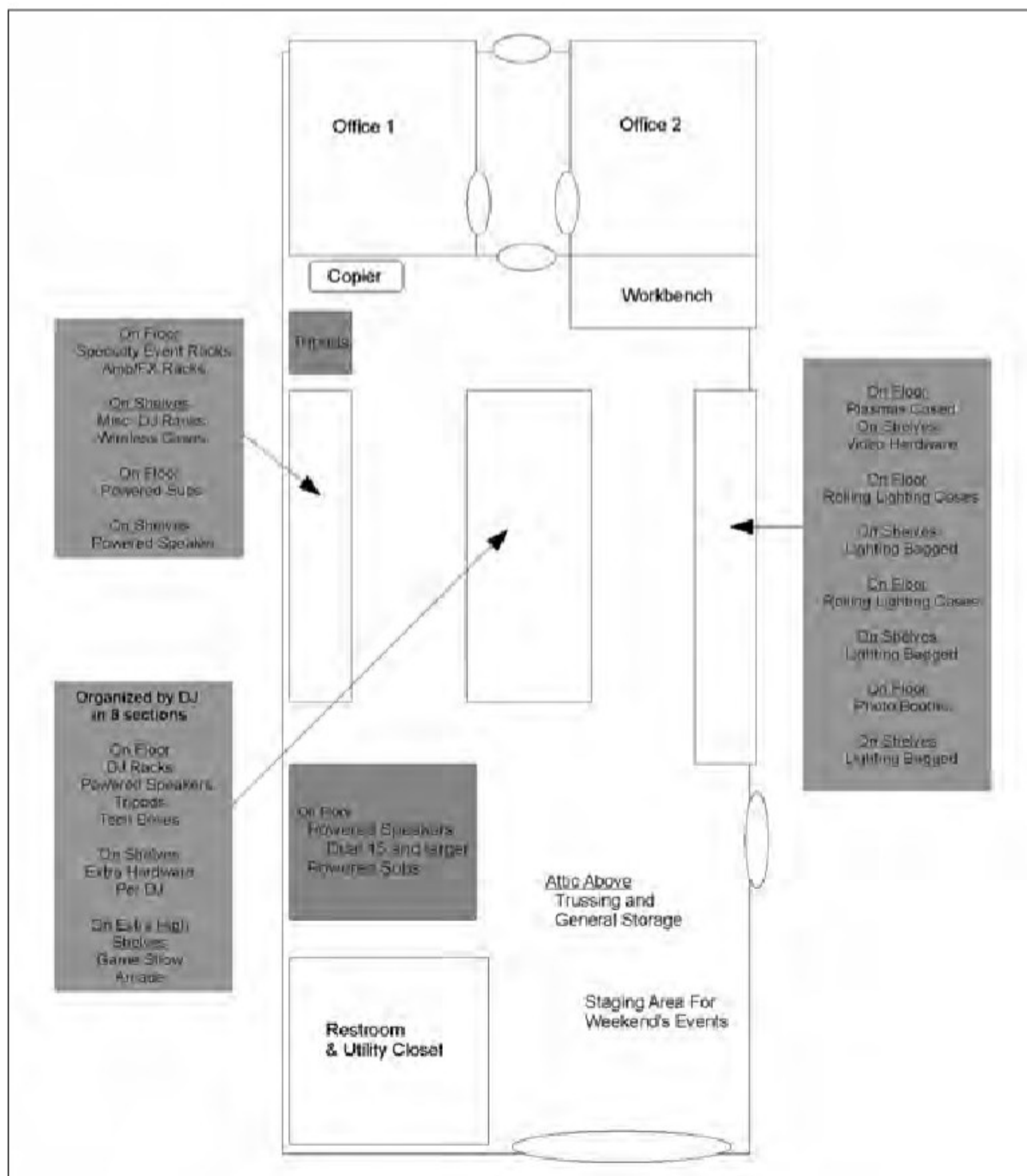
Most DJ companies fall into several categories in terms of how they handle their gear:

1. Single-op
2. Multi-op where the DJs each own their gear and handle it separately from the company.
3. Multi-op where all the DJs "check out" a company-owned rig with hardware that is similar (but not necessarily exactly the same) to all the others.
4. Multi-op where the company has base systems for each of the DJs, and then other inventory.
5. Some mix of the above.

We chose option #4 as the refinement of our previous option #3 situation from 10+ years ago. We have been refining that option ever since, getting better with it every year. Jake Feldman, our DJ technology manager, as well as production manager for the Mobile Beat shows and review coordinator/editor for the magazine, is responsible for the tender loving care that has honed our gear organization scenario over the last few years.

### TRADING SPACES

When we moved into the "new" office/warehouse this spring, after





basically remodeling, Jake brought in wall racking, made modifications, and marked all shelves and key spaces to determine gear storage and work areas. This made it easy to move the gear from the old building (where it had lost its organization a bit due to the upcoming move) directly into good order in the new location. His original layout was adjusted here and there, but basically worked like a charm to get things sorted out.

During the cleanout we were able to see a lot of items we have that we didn't remember, such as adapters, cables and more. After being in a location for more than five years, things do get misplaced, leading to unnecessary duplication, so I recommend that every larger company go through such a overall cleanout every few years.

### STANDARD EQUIPMENT

We have figured out what most of the DJs use on their average gigs and set that aside for them for each gig. It is typically based on entertaining a crowd of about 200 or so at an average wedding, school dance or corporate event, and includes the following:

- Mounted in tabletop case: DJ mixer; media controller (in our case Pioneer MEP-7000s) with hard drive; wireless microphone; power protection; base lighting controller.
- Carried in technical box: five black ADJ Accu Cable extension cords (2 with 3 ports on them, 3 with a single and longer); four XLR cables for audio; wired microphone; misc. adapters and extensions.
- Separately carried: two 12" or 15" powered speakers; two Frankenstand tripods for sound, one for lighting; Chauvet 4-Bar.

When doing events that go beyond this level, they are then pulling subwoofers, additional lights, sometimes turntables that the DJs hook through their Rane/Serato units, and other gear; or for large events, going all the way up to our "wall-of-sound" systems, trussing, DMX yoke lights and more. Because many of our events are sold with such upgrades on the contract, we are

working on using eWebmin to keep track of inventory but for now, it's kept track of by Jake using other methods.

When it comes down to Wednesday or Thursday of a week with events, Jake makes a list and gear is pulled by staff member Bill Burkett. He locates any required additional gear and assembles it in the staging area, so that the DJ just has to pull their standard gear from their bay, and then grab the rest from the staging area.

Overall, our system is evolving with the expansion of our company, simply out of need and the desire for better organization. We have found that the better organized and cared for the gear is, the more we can rely on it every week. It also makes it easier to grab the inevitable last-minute addition or forgotten item in a hurry!

How do YOU organize your gear as a single operator or a multi-operator? If you are interested in submitting information for future articles on this topic, please contact Ryan at [rb@mobilebeat.com](mailto:rb@mobilebeat.com). We look forward to featuring other approaches to organizing the all-important technology that makes us mobile DJs. **MB**

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Your local music gear retailer is still the only place you can get your hands on actual gear to try before you buy! Stores listed here typically have DJ gear-savvy sales people ready to help you make the right buying decisions. Don't miss out on what the stores have to offer!



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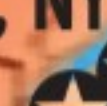
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# School Sales Tune-up

GEARING UP FOR THE COMING YEAR'S DANCES

By Arnoldo Offermann

**T**hey say it's quiet before the storm, but it should always be a relative type of quiet. Many think that you should contact schools the moment class begins; the smarter DJs wait a week prior since that's when teachers usually get back in.

I'm here to say WRONG and WRONG.

You don't think that teachers go the entire summer without checking their email, do you? To date, we have sent out over \$40,000 in contracts and over \$60,000 in proposals for homecoming 2012. This is exciting because last year we had a great year with a \$75,000 homecoming season; I'm going for a \$100,000 goal. We're at 40% of said goal, and (as of this writing) summer just began! (Don't even get me started on prom 2013 and 2014...)

I would say that about 40% of those proposals and contracts were sent after school let out. I've set up meeting with teachers and even student committees. Not sure how that works, because I don't remember having THAT much school spirit during the summer.

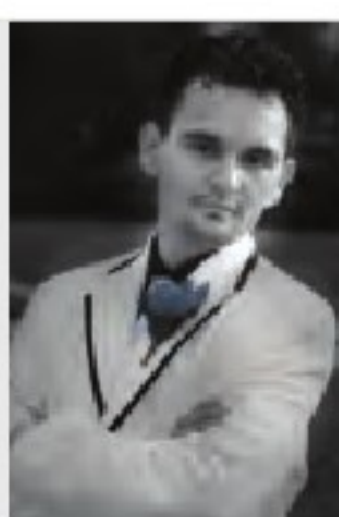
## JUMP IN

It's a bit too late to start with step one, which is calling every school and asking for the person in charge of homecoming (and prom, while you're at it) and their email address. However, get a database set up and get ready to call EVERY DAY a week prior to school starting. You will encounter lots of "we don't have that info yet" which usually means the sponsor's name has been picked but they don't know about it. In that case, ask for the previous sponsor and email them asking for the info.

No no, it's too late for that too. But you don't want to mail a catchy flyer JUST yet—it'll only make it to the circular file. At least you can put the school mailing addresses in said database and prep your flyers. Put addresses and stamps in each flyer. This is tiresome and gruesome work...but hey—you've got time to kill, right?

Alas, it IS quiet during the summer if you didn't prep beforehand, but it's never too late to prep now! Email every sponsor you've worked with this past year and find out the info for next year's dance. Remember that sponsors talk to each other often, so see if the sponsors you've built serious rapport with (you did do that, right?) have any information they can give you. Email

*Arnoldo Offermann specializes in youth events, and is the driving force behind 4 Schools Only, a hugely successful division of A Premier Entertainment, in Central Florida (Tampa, Orlando). Find out more at [www.4schoolsonly.com](http://www.4schoolsonly.com), [www.apremierentertainment.com](http://www.apremierentertainment.com) and [www.arnoldooffermann.com](http://www.arnoldooffermann.com). He shares many of his school success secrets at [www.masterschooldances.com](http://www.masterschooldances.com).*



those sponsors and begin your sales (and remember never to give pricing).

Your goal of each email should be:

- Confirm the information is correct
- Confirm date (to make sure you're available), but do it after you talk for a bit so you build rapport for the following year
- Find out likes and dislikes on last year's dance. Take notes, this is your sales arsenal.
- Find out theme.
- Set up a meeting with the students or teacher... whoever has ANY say in the dance should be there.
- Be helpful! Help her find décor, theme ideas, etc.. build rapport.

Notice I said NOTHING about budget. If I prequalified every lead I talked to, we'd make \$10,000 a season. I've had many schools come to me with a \$500 budget that add an extra zero to it after all is said and done.

You may or may not get a lot of bites during the summer, but at least you'll be in the swing of things and be charged up for when school starts. Be advised, the first two weeks are hectic and may not get anywhere. Still, plug along and keep trying and take careful notes on said database.



Email the flyers two weeks before school starts. You want those in their hands when they walk in. Mail them again 3-4 weeks in, just in case the first batch made it into the "I need to review but I'm going to forget in three days where I put this" file.

Until school starts again, get your materials ready: Make sure you have a "presentation kit" ready. Mine includes a small console for live beatmixing, an iPad with TONS of videos and photos, a portable projector, a speaker with a built in mixer, and a cart. Business cards and flyers need to show your best work. If the photos on said material are dated compared to your new offerings, update them now. While we're on that, update your website with new images, updates, and anything that says "HEY! BOOK US FOR THIS YEAR'S HOMECOMING/PROM!"

If you have a staff (and you should), begin prepping them by going over setup and breakdown procedures, wiring lights, etc. As you do this, watch Ben Stowe's ProAcademy Geek Boot Camp DVD ([www.nlfxpro.com](http://www.nlfxpro.com)) and maybe do a few practice setups.

### BE AWARE, STAY MOTIVATED

Review your competition, what do they offer that you don't? What is THEIR USP and how do you beat it? They say you shouldn't worry about your competition, but when your client asks "well ABC can do this and this" do you want to be caught with your pants down? I already know what my sales leads will ask before they even ask it, and my preparation allows me to discuss what

we do clearly and with precision, even if DJ company so and so said "no one uses wired DMX lights anymore so avoid ANYONE who isn't wireless." (Yes, that really happened.)

Don't do this for just homecoming, do this for prom, too! Get in a swing of things and have someone help you. It is INCREDIBLY easy to get unmotivated thanks to horrible people on the telephone who sound like they're on drugs as you try to find out the sponsor's name. Having someone to tag team with allows you to clear your mind for a bit without losing time. Remember that while you can call all day to get names, you won't speak with a sponsor unless it's before school, lunch, planning, or after school. Anytime else, ask to be transferred to their voicemail.

Oh, and remember that you don't call it a meeting or consultation. Visits with lawyers, doctors, and other "I really don't want to be there" meetings are called consultations. Call this an AUDITION, dagnabbit. You are a DJ above all else—the rockstar to rockstars, the reason the music world spins round and round, and the reason the dance exists to begin with. You're not there to consult, you are there to PERFORM, and that in itself yields an audition. Break the pattern of sales every DJ is using and use a different language and attitude.

Remember the cool kid in school? Well, that's you, and you best act like it. Work hard on sales, and your next few months will be busy with consulta—er, auditions! **MB**

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# From Sideline to Dual Career

WHERE BEING AN ENTERTAINER CAN LEAD YOU

By Stu Chisholm

**A**s a DJ, entertainer and entrepreneur, life can take you in a lot of different directions. You become a “jack of all trades,” gaining some expertise in business, as an electrician, as a computer programmer, as a theatrical lighting tech, as a mover and in many other areas. And in some cases, those side-aspects can even equal or outpace our main-line of DJ work.

The online forums are filled with DJs talking about how many photo booths they’ve got going out, or how many venues they’ve decorated with uplights, even though they aren’t performing that weekend. And this is not a bad thing!

For one thing, this means that there is still some money coming in. In fact, I often hear DJs talk about how their uplighting brought in more cash than their DJ show, because they can provide uplighting at several venues, but are limited to one party as entertainers.

The hard, cold fact is that we can’t do everything. Most DJs have chosen one or two things to help supplement their income. One might opt to provide chair covers while another might run a photo booth. A multi-op might have enough staff to have dedicated people for each “division.” For the single-ops among us, we tend to go with our interests. Mine came from an unexpected angle...

## STEPHEN KING’S DISEASE

For me, my sidelines were a complete surprise, the first one being a writing gig. Yes, the column you see here, the book it is based on, and my earlier presence in *Mobile Beat* and a few other DJ publications all came from a particularly good “letter to the editor.” *Mobile Beat* Editor Dan Walsh, apparently took note of my attention to detail (other friends have described me as a “grammar Nazi,” and I do have a strong scholastic English background) and invited me to contribute to the magazine. This was back in 2005, and has led to several other writing ventures, most of which center around DJ entertainment, my main career



now for over 30 years. In a twist that only real life can bring about, however, my combined DJ and writing background took me where few might expect, but more than a few DJs have gone on their own.

## ARRESTED BY DJ SECURITY

If you’re a long-time reader, you might recall my four-part series on DJ security, the “dark side” of entertaining that few people really want to think about. We do it anyway, though, because it’s just plain smart. I did a lot of research on everything from locks to insurance. I spoke to police officers, security professionals and even a tour manager for several bands, and then I applied what I learned to the world of mobile DJs. In the final installment, I created a bit of controversy by suggesting that in areas where it is legal, a smart entertainer should consider getting the necessary training to carry a concealed firearm, since most of us mobile DJs don’t make “big star”

money that would enable us to afford bodyguards.

I didn’t reach this conclusion flippantly or casually. The first thing that put DJs and firearms together in my mind was a news item back in the mid-’90s that appeared one night as my wife and I had dinner in front of the TV. Just as I frequently do, the DJ in the news item took his assistants out to breakfast after a gig. While they ate, the DJ looked through the window and noticed some men trying to get into his trailer. He went out and confronted them and was shot and killed.

Later, I did a stint as a DJ equipment salesman at a major Detroit area A-V store that also had a large rental department where I would sometimes help out. I noticed that one of our regular customers owned a very nice cube truck similar to my own. I found this curious because I’d gotten mine when my equipment became too much for my regular van to carry, yet these guys showed up in an empty truck every week and rented our gear! When I asked about it, the customer said, “Oh, we once

had so much equipment that we were thinking of getting an even bigger truck. Then one day as we were loading out of a show, three men with guns showed up and made us load our equipment into THEIR truck.”

*Stu Chisholm, a mobile DJ in the Detroit area since 1979, has also been a nightclub DJ, done some radio, some commercial voice-over work and has even worked a roller skating rink! Stu attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and has been a music collector since the age of seven. Stu’s guide to the profession, **The Complete DJ**, is available from ProDJ Publishing.*





## DIVERSION OR CONVERSION?

Because of these and a few other incidents, I began my journey into learning the ins and outs of firearms and legal concealed carrying. I also became a bit of an advocate over the years, working with the grassroots group responsible for the reform of Michigan's CCW laws. Through various classes, books, endless conversation with very smart, well-informed people and a lot of practice, I've become something of an authority on firearms and the laws surrounding them. I've also helped various friends and colleagues obtain their permits.

This natural progression has had some interesting recent developments. First of all, I've been in quite a bit of demand by friends from both my local DJ group and a Meetup group I'm involved with to teach them about firearms. Up to now, I've kept it very informal. But in order to do things the right way, I'll finally be obtaining my NRA certification as an instructor over the next eight weeks. With two built-in pools of students, my classes will be able to thank the mobile DJ industry and the safety concerns surrounding it for the expertise of their teacher!


## FULL CIRCLE

Even with all of these diversions, my passion always leans toward entertaining, communicating and writing, which for me are all one in the same. Having amassed a fairly vast amount of knowledge on the topic, I've recently completed work on a

new book called, *Knowing Guns: The Ins and Outs of Firearms and Firearm Politics for the Uninitiated*. I felt the need to write it for all of the people who, like me, hadn't really given the issue much thought before getting into it for practical reasons, and may have some funny ideas about it. I'm astounded at the amount of disinformation, misinformation and political spin that surrounds the whole issue. My book dispenses with partisan politics and focuses on solid, practical information, facts and reason, hopefully in an entertaining, attention-grabbing manner. With any luck (and I'll need it), you'll be able to find it later this year or early next.

## FOLLOW YOUR PASSION

So where is your path taking you? Has your work with a photo booth fostered a passion for photography? (Or, more likely, writing better software?) Is the art of decorative uplighting becoming as important to you as your music or performance? Are you really grooving on editing your wedding videos and feel like going beyond weddings to even bigger challenges? Or perhaps you might even have a book inside of you that's just screaming to be let out. Whatever your essential sideline may be, do not be afraid to explore and develop it completely. You'll grow as a performer and as a person, and maybe even grow a much larger bank account in the process.

Until next time, safe spinnin'! 



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# Living in Multiple Dimensions

PARTNERS HANDLE MOBILE, CLUB...AND MICKEY

Whether it's in high-end nightclubs, with a thriving mobile business, or at a Disney theme park, DJ Michael Paul and DJ John Joseph are ready to entertain any kind of crowd. Here we take a look at the making of their successful DJ partnership.

**Mobile Beat:** Tell us about how you got started in DJing...

**Michael Paul:** I started, probably in high school, maybe even middle school, it's been that long ago. And I've been mobile DJing weddings, school dances for 20 years and full-time as a professional company for about 15 years. I mean, I started this business right in high school.

And basically the company went through several different changes with—obviously as times change, rebranding. Originally it was EFX Entertainment...over time we have

developed it into Location DJ and I've rebranded myself as DJ Michael Paul [aka Michael Swenson]...

Early on, I got into DJing the school events—which I think one of the great ways to start for DJs, because you have an audience in front of you. And then it took me into building my own company, starting my own brand...And then for some reason, I just decided to get out of it...I wanted to get into the nightclub industry. For a while my only focus was DJing nightclubs...Las Vegas, big nightclubs, Jet nightclub; traveled around from California, Arizona...across the country, other countries, DJing these big nightclubs...

And then a couple years ago—and we'll introduce my business partner, John—I found I could apply what I learned about club DJing back to the mobile company. And we rebranded our company from EFX Entertainment to Location DJ, and now go to trade shows and conventions and all this different stuff.

I think one of the benefits I had was the ability to see the mobile side of it versus the nightclub side of it and why each worked and had their own different traits, and how to apply it to my business.

**M B:** How did John Joseph come into the mix?

**M P:** Well, let me introduce John and then I'll let him take it over. I met John many years ago and we became friends, and he had a passion for DJing...I brought him on as sort of an apprentice...I'm one of those teachers that throws you into the mix and then says, okay, learn. And that's what happened.

**John Joseph:** It's very true. I got into this with Michael 10 or so years with EFX Entertainment. And I was the roadie, pack hand, carrying in all the CDs and players and speakers. I remember being at an event up in the Long Beach area and he said, 'Hey, take over.' I'm like, what? Sure. So that's how I got into it and started doing my own events.

And when Michael took a turn for the nightclubs, I thought, hey, that looks like fun. So I did the same thing, branding myself as John Joseph and getting out there; also traveling in different states, different nightclubs but still never left the whole DJ company side. I still enjoy doing the school dances, the grad nights, the weddings.

**M P:** I guess you could say our focus -- you know, one thing that's big with mobile DJs is marketing, and I think that's one of the topics that's covered on a weekly basis for everyone. It's also marketing.

**M B:** When you focused on the club side, what happened with the mobile business?

**M P:** And one of the things that we stopped doing was marketing. You



DJ Michael Paul



know, I think I've heard in the past that people say if you can walk away from your business for two years and be able to come back to it within two years, you have a pretty good business...And we really built up in the past our business for repeat clients...We stopped advertising, so the business that we did get was just as the phone rang we would take a call or a repeat client would call...the mobile business really died down, but we basically built ourselves back up and took the tools from DJing around the world at clubs and around the U.S. and put them back into our company. And we've rebranded it to the Location DJ, a new fresh start.

Now we're really doing both, mobile and club. Myself being the resident now for Disneyland, being a resident DJ, I'm there every week. John mostly runs the mobile side of things and deals with clients, etc...

**J J:** Going from the nightclub back into the mobile company, I actually more enjoy the mobile company better, just because you get a friendlier atmosphere from it and dealing with all the schools, going to all the conventions and meeting different people. So it's been nice.

**M P:** I think one of the cool things with the mobile company is, number one, we're our own boss. We get to say yes or no; we get to help clients out and make their events the best they can be. Whereas in the nightclub industry, you pretty much just show up, you kind of do your thing, and then you're done. It's in and out and there's not a lot to it. And with the mobile company, you get to have your equipment and your lighting and you deal with clients pre- and post-event.

**M B:** There are a lot of DJs who either start in the clubs and don't really understand the interaction necessary in a mobile situation; and then there the mobiles who could never make the transition into the club market. Tell us a little bit about finding the balance, especially as it relates to your Disney gig.

**M P:** Well, I'll cover mine and then I'll let John cover his, because John deals with schools and weddings.

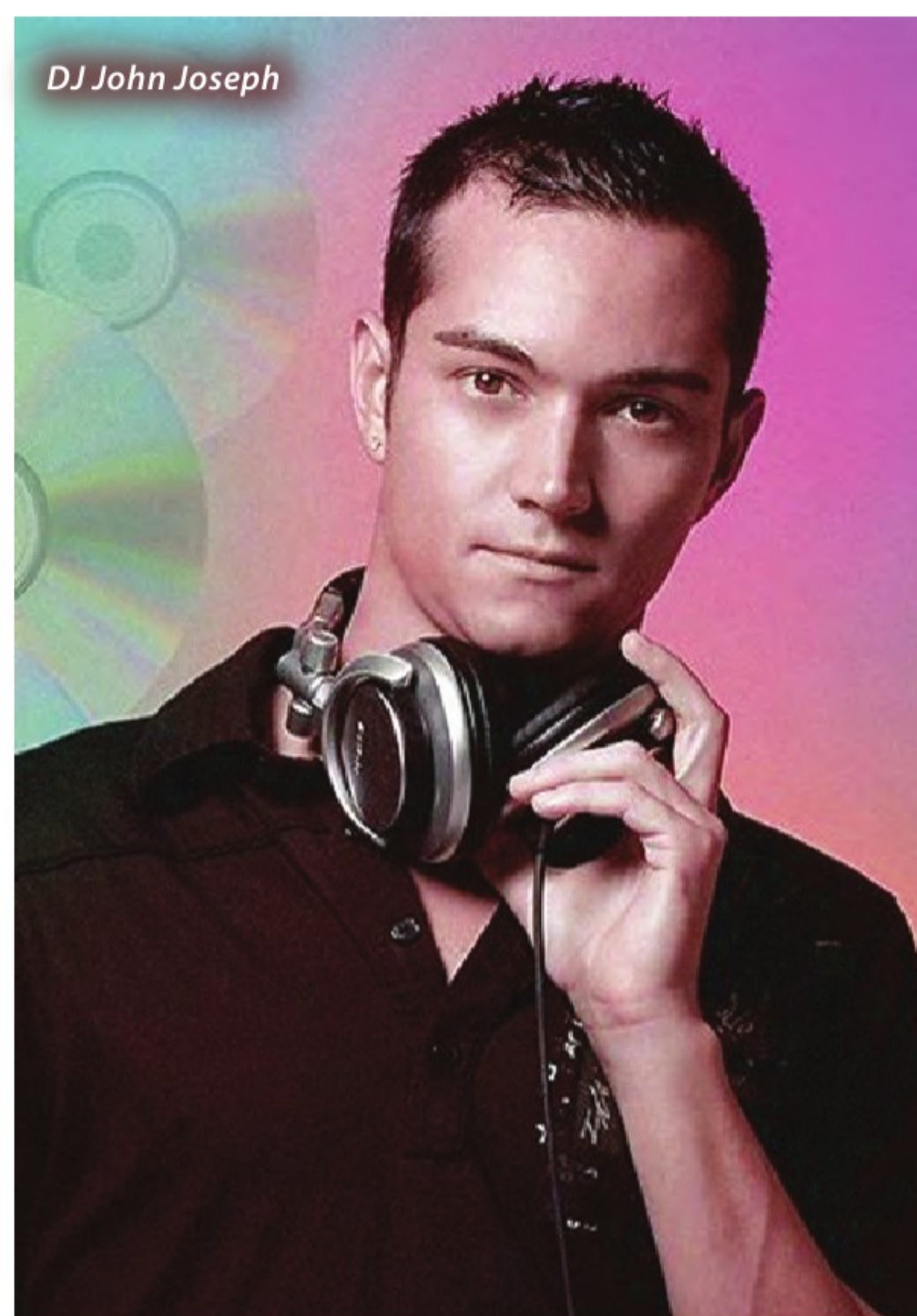
But I will say for myself, obviously, in a nightclub, there's very little interaction with the audience. They are there to dance. You might make an announcement here and there or get the crowd hyped up. With the mobile company, obviously it's interaction, it's introductions, it's getting people up and moving to create that nightclub vibe that every mobile DJ wants.

Disney's sort of an in-between thing... it's hard to believe that Disney throws this huge nightclub/rave-style event through the entire summer and even throughout the year. It really is a combination of a little mobile and a little nightclub. On the nightclub side, we're playing the music, we're giving them the beast, I guess you could say, that they want. But we still have that interaction of "everyone get your hands up in the air and get out here" and do the mobile-type stuff also.

I think mobile DJs should get into a nightclub every now and then and experience what that's like. That's really going to help you out for those mobile events that want that sort of a feel...at school dances, even though they're still young, it seems like they're acting older and they're growing up so fast that you almost have to have that sort of a nightclub feel at a school dance.

Even at weddings now, the people that are getting married, the ages are 18 to 35 (at least in our business), and they want that sort of a nightclub feel at the end of the night. The beginning of the night, the traditional type stuff; and then as it goes on, they want to have that nightclub feel.

And now, from a DJ who only does nightclubs, going to a mobile, yeah, it's a bit of a difference. It's about being more comfortable to talk on the microphone, to interact, to be able to get out of your DJ booth, literally. You know, it's weird to walk away from your equipment and step



DJ John Joseph

in front with a microphone and get some people out on the dance floor and do that stuff. It can be scary.

**J J:** Basically, the way I do the interaction, the nightclubs really help me get on top of the music and stay what's current, because the people in the nightclub want to hear what's going on new in the industry. Going right into the school dances, those kids are listening to that same kind of music. So it's really aided me and the company to be able to have that music, be able to know what's going on...So the whole experience that I got from the nightclubs really, really benefitted me with the school events and dances in general.

**M P:** I think with a lot of mobile DJs—and I can say this because we are—a lot of times mobile DJs rely on charts.

For example, I'm actually a *Billboard*-reporting DJ. There's 150 DJs in the United States who make up the *Billboard* dance charts, and I'm one of those DJs. So I actually have this really cool luxury of every week I get to chart the latest music.



And being a club DJ and the way that works is you play new music and you have instant feedback in front of you, being at a nightclub.

Now, with a mobile company... you want to play the hits, you want to play the stuff that they like, they know...Whereas being in the club world, you have that luxury of trying new things...We're being exposed to several thousand people on a weekly



basis at a nightclub. The energy is high, and obviously at nightclubs there's drinking. And you can get away with a song or two that they know, and then maybe right after that, play two songs they've never heard. If the energy still stays high and they feed off of it, I can report it back to *Billboard*, saying this was a really great song...Having that benefit of going from nightclub to mobile DJ and having that ability of reading a crowd with new music and playing new music versus just a CD subscription—feeling out both of those really, really helps you out.

**M B:** Tell us more about what makes your company unique.

**M P:** It's all about style. I think any client that's going to hire you is hiring you for your style. To be honest, we all play the same music; we all have speakers. And if it gets into the contest of, well, who has the biggest speakers or who has the better

lighting—it's really not about that.

I think you think need to present yourselves as an artist. Even as a mobile you're talking and you're presenting yourself and you have your distinctive style of doing it...

**J J:** In my opinion, it's all about putting on the show. For the mobile aspect, we're getting that show quality from the nightclubs, everything we put on at the nightclubs. My style is very Top-40/remix with a little bit of new house. People know that music, they love that music...So bringing that to the mobile side,—and, as I said, even some weddings enjoy it—bringing that atmosphere, bringing that style and that whole show aspect to the school really separates us from other companies because we've lived both worlds.

**M P:** And you bring up a good point, because in the past five years or so, big, headline DJs—they're rock stars. You know, I DJ at Disneyland and we are considered rock stars. All we're doing up there is DJing and playing music. But you've got 3,000, 5,000 people in front of you, facing you, watching you mix these songs together, remix live, add in transitions, build, effects, and you're fist-pumping and everyone's going crazy. I mean, we're putting on a show.

Big DJs in Las Vegas and around the world are creating this visual and sound show experience, and to take that and put it in your mobile company—now you're not just bringing a DJ with some lighting and two speakers or whatever...We're bringing a show. We're bringing an experience. And the way we do that is by our interaction as the performer. So we're not just up there playing music back and forth. I mean, the way we're doing it, we almost look like we're conducting our equipment. You know, our hands are bumping

and we're getting crazy and we're dancing in front of it and people are watching us.

...And we're not only are commanding it with our hands, but we're using our body, our voice, and creating an experience that the guests, whether it be a wedding or a school dance or whatever, walk away going, wow, that was so much fun. Obviously, different events demand different sorts of shows. At a wedding, we're not trying to be the center of attention. But there are ways of doing it so that you can still create a show that the bride and the groom and the family and the friends and the guests go, "That DJ of yours rocked. How do I get that DJ at my event?"

And that's one of the reasons we've been so successful: we've built our clients based on referrals and recommendations. And you've probably heard it a hundred times—it's easier to keep a client than it is to go out and find a client; then that client that you keep pretty refers you to people. And that's a great way of building your business.

But I think in the long run, finding the balance on what type of event you're doing, whether it's a wedding, a school dance, a private party, to bring a show, and make it exactly right for that event without going over the top, is the best way of doing it and the best way of differentiating yourselves from your competitors.

**M B:** Fantastic. How can readers find out more about you guys?

**M P:** For our mobile company, you can check out [LocationDJ.com](http://LocationDJ.com). And for our nightclub world, for me you can check out [DJMichaelPaul.com](http://DJMichaelPaul.com), and for John Joseph, you can check out [DJJohnJoseph.com](http://DJJohnJoseph.com).

And I think between the two—mobile DJ and a nightclub—to kind of wrap it up, the best way of incorporating the two is experience. You know how everyone always says practice makes perfect? Well, if you can practice one side of the fence and then go to the other side of the fence, now you have experience from both worlds. Not only are you going to make yourself better, but you're going to make your events superior to anybody else's out there. **MB**

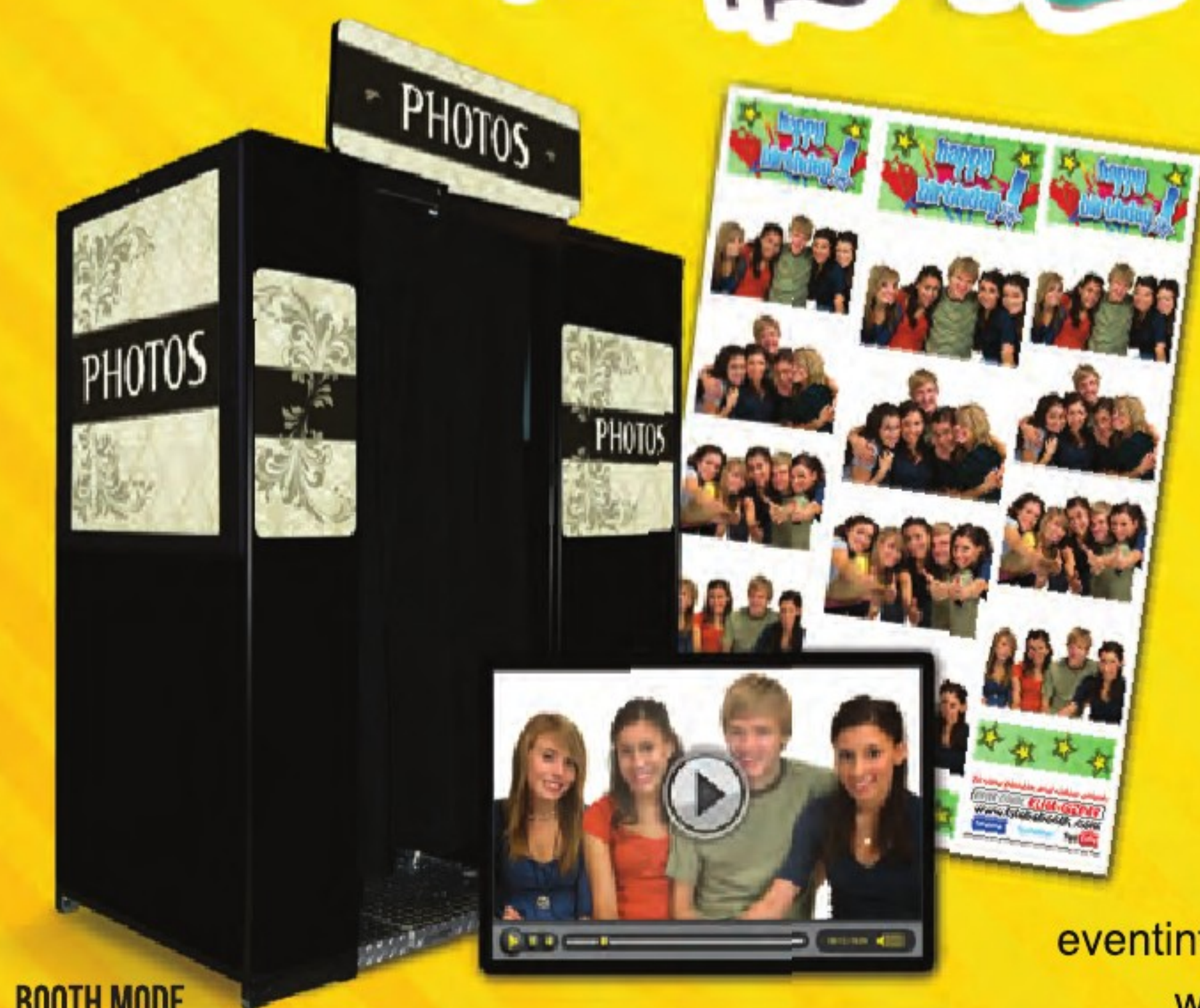


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# Singing a New Song

**SONGWRITER TONY CARTER PROVIDES UNIQUE, MEANINGFUL WEDDING MUSIC**

By Ryan Burger and Dan Walsh

**W**hen it comes to nuptial music, DJs and wedding couples have many classic tunes available to provide a soundtrack for the day's many special moments.

And these days, many couples opt for very specific songs, not necessarily well known, but with special meaning to them. Then there are those who don't have specific songs in mind, but are still looking for something that really expresses the meaning and emotion of the day in a deeper way than other popular music. That's where songwriter Tony Carter comes in. Tony has built a unique catalog of wedding music, comprised of songs based on personal experience, but expressing emotions and ideas that have resonated with brides and grooms across the nation and beyond.

## STUMBLING INTO AN UNFILLED NICHE

A schoolteacher by day and rock guitar player otherwise, Tony's initial effort at wedding music was completely personal. "It came time for me to get married," he recalls, "and I decided to attempt to write my own wedding song. I did, and I performed it at our wedding."

Five years down the road, with his wife's enthusiastic encouragement, Tony had a demo of the song produced. She assured him that others would appreciate the song, and so he embarked on a journey into the realm of wedding music.

For the song, "This Ring," he invested in top-notch Nashville production and ended up with a high-quality track. However, the next step was unclear at first. "I thought, wow, this is great. What do I do now? Do I pitch it? Do I keep it as a keepsake? What do I do?" The answer that came "on a whim" was to create a website to promote the song. In a short time, he was shipping copies to eager brides and grooms-to-be.

Although still unconvinced of the broad appeal his personal creation seemed to be having, Tony decided to take a closer look at the potential market for "purpose-built" wedding tunes.

"I spent the next few months trying to determine what people wanted to hear on their wedding day," says Tony. "And the thing that I found out the most was that people were really out there looking. People were looking for unique songs for their wedding."

"They were tired of hearing the same old country song or the same old song that may not have been written for weddings, but people used them anyhow to try to fit that need. But I thought, well, I'm kind of a songwriter. I can sit down and I can craft something that can be moment-specific for weddings and kind of fill that need...I wrote a song called 'Dance With Me' and a song called 'Here We Stand.' And I really tried to capture the moment of when those songs would be used at a wedding, and I put those online."

In this way, by 2007 Tony had developed a collection of wedding songs that were clearly filling an empty niche in the

market, if growing sales were any indication.

"The truth is, there's not a lot of kind of moment-specific original wedding songwriters out there. And a lot of the bigger artists aren't doing this type of music, and so I just kind of stumbled upon a niche. And I was fortunate enough to be able to hit it at a pretty good time..."

## IF YOU'RE GONNA DO SOMETHING, IT'S WORTH DOING RIGHT

Initially, Tony had intended to sing his first song, "This Ring," himself. Although he had already decided on using studio musicians to create a quality track, he thought he would probably stick with his own vocals, considering the personal nature of the song. It took just a little feedback from a Nashville producer to convince him otherwise. An award-winning demo singer added the element that took the track to the next level.

Tony remembers, "When I heard him, it just sounded much more professional. I thought, you know what? It's my song. I crafted the melodies. I crafted all the guitar licks; all the lyrics and things like that. I don't mind. I wanted it to sound good. And from that point on, I realized that's probably the path I needed to take."

It would be a scary path at first, with thousands of dollars poured into each new project. "That was kind of a risky thing for me, especially being a schoolteacher. I didn't have a lot of income and I was kind of going out on faith. It took a lot of encouragement from my wife."

"If you're going to make a song and you want to put it out there, you want to put your best foot forward," says the songwriter. "You want to get the best musicians out there for that production. Because I've heard some things...granted, I think some of those songs are pretty good. But you can tell in the production that it's not quite up to par; it's not radio-ready...So that's one of the things that I spend extra on so that somebody gets something that was done right."

## FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH

Tony has resisted the pressure to put his songs up for sale on iTunes for 99 cents a pop. Like every other aspect of a wedding day, he feels that his songs are worth a little extra, considering what they add to the occasion. He also watches over the songs like children he is sending out into the world.

"From my standpoint," he says, "just to be able to run a small business on my own, I have a certain price point. And I thought, well, what would I pay for a song that was really going to capture the moment of a special time during that day? I started selling my original song for \$15.99. I thought, you know what, somebody's going to pay that, because it means that much..."

"...It's music, yes--but I'm also in the wedding industry. I provide a service. And for me, because I don't deal with massive sales volume, I kind of have to keep my price point a little bit higher just to keep things going."

While he insists on getting what his songs are worth, Tony





understands the importance of those who serve up the songs at the celebration.

"I really appreciate DJs. I mean, I'm not dumb. I know my music's going to get played by a lot of DJs and I can be friendly about it. You know, I think if I work with DJs in this manner the best that I can, they're going to be more willing to promote what I have. So I really appreciate that. I've gotten a lot of good feedback from a lot of people." And Tony adds a professional courtesy of sorts: "I've always had a discount for DJs. If you want to send me a quick contact email or something like that, let me know that you're a DJ, where you're from and things like that, and I'll be glad to hook you up with a discount code or a coupon or something like that just for stopping by."

### CAPTURING THE EMOTION, CRAFTING THE TUNES

One reason Tony's songs have struck such chord with wedding couples is their direct connection with life experience. He gets his inspiration from family, other people and the stuff of real life.

"As far as inspiration, it could be anything. My song 'Daddy's Angel,' I just really didn't know where to begin with that. I tinkered with the idea of writing a father-daughter song for a long time. But when you've got 'Butterfly Kisses' and you've got 'I Loved Her First' out there, I really wasn't motivated that much to put one out; because I thought, man, there's some pretty tough competition.

"At first, the only thing that I had was the opening line, 'I'm giving you away but I'm not letting go.' And I kept thinking, I've got to write a whole song about that. Then it was basically a lot of long drives with my wife and we were having a lot of conversations--tell me what it felt like; tell me about your relationship with your dad and a lot of those type things. And so I would take notes." After some weeks of further struggling, an afternoon free from distractions yielded a finished song.

"Sometimes it's just coming up with the song title first. I had a song called 'Here We Stand,' and I gave it that title because it's the unity candle where you're standing there and you're looking at your partner. And usually you hear music in the background and you're just staring at each other for about three minutes...it's a little bit awkward. I could picture the bride and groom holding each other's hands, looking at each other while that music passed. And so I thought, I need to do something with some lyrics here. And so there were have 'here we stand face to face, brought here together by God's amazing grace' and so on.

Tony Carter has focused a fresh creative eye on the musical moments that combine to make weddings memorable. DJs who are looking for another alternative to offer when brides are looking beyond the standards would do well to check out the songs he has to offer. Who knows--Tony's personal touch might just be the ally you need to win over your next nuptial couple. **MB**

## One-Stop Music Shop

At [TCarterMusic.com](http://TCarterMusic.com) you can find out more about the songs of Tony Carter and obtain MP3s, CDs and sheet music. You'll also find all the music needed to do a whole wedding, such as processional and special dances.



# Dick Clark Remembered

By Rick Ellis

I was sitting at my desk after lunch on Wednesday April 18, when a news alert hit my iPhone, “Dick Clark dead at age 83.” I stopped working and said a quick prayer, not only for Dick and his family but also for the millions of people he touched throughout his life, via radio and television.

## A NATURAL ON THE MIC

Richard “Dick” Clark was born November 30, 1929 and grew up in Mount Vernon, New York; he had one older brother Bradley who died while serving in World War II. Dick decided at the age

of 10 that radio was his calling; this came as no surprise as his father (also named Richard), who was the manager of an AM radio station, WRUN, owned by his uncle. In 1945, shortly after beginning his career in the WRUN mailroom, he was tapped to fill in for a vacationing weatherman and his natural talent led to more on air time, initially announcing station breaks. After graduating from high school Dick enrolled at Syracuse University, where he worked at a small country music station, WOLF-AM. He graduated in 1951 with a degree in advertising with a minor in radio. After graduation he returned home briefly, again working at WRUN, using the on air name “Dick Clay,” but he soon landed his first television job, hosting *Cactus Dick and the Santa Fe Riders* on WKTV in Utica, New York.

## BANDSTAND BOUND

1952 was a pivotal year for Dick, as he moved to the Philadelphia suburbs and took a job at radio station WFIL, where he first used the name Dick Clark on the air. The radio station also had a television station with the same call sign with a show called *Bob Horn’s Bandstand*. Dick was asked to be the substitute host when Horn would go on vacation, and on July 9, 1956 he became the show’s permanent how after Horn was fired following a drunk driving arrest.

He immediately made the show his own by making significant changes, including ending the show’s all-white policy and bringing on black artists such as Chuck Berry and Fats Domino, and in time, desegregating the audience. Only one year later, the ABC television network acquired the show, renaming it *American Bandstand*. On August 5, 1957 America was introduced to the show and to Dick Clark, who interviewed Elvis Presley on the first show. The show became an instant hit, due in no small part to Dick’s charm, rapport with the live audience and dancers, and the non-threatening image that he projected. With this image he was trying to ease parents’ fears about this new rock & roll music that their kids were listening to. Michael Uslan, a producer in Hollywood said, “He was able to use his unparalleled communication skills to present rock & roll in a way that was palatable to parents.”

ABC added *American Bandstand* to its Saturday night schedule in 1958, where an estimated 20 million viewers tuned in to watch the charismatic host and his dancers. Artists who were lucky enough to have their records played on the program saw instant sales boosts following an appearance. Early in the 1960s, the show switched from only playing records to having live performances by the artists, many of whom got their first nationwide exposure on the show, including Chubby Checker, Jerry Lee Lewis, Stevie Wonder and Simon and Garfunkel, just to name a few. In a 1990 *Rolling Stone* interview by Henry Schipper, Dick noted that “over two-thirds





of the people who've been initiated into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame had their television debuts on *American Bandstand*."

During the show's run, over 10,000 live performances took place on its stage, featuring many artists who could not get national television exposure elsewhere as many television variety shows, especially in the '60s and early '70s, were anti-rock and refused to have them on. In 1964, with surf music groups dominating the charts, Dick made the decision to move *Bandstand* from Philadelphia to Los Angeles, where the show continued until its cancellation.

## BEYOND BANDSTAND

As a result of Dick Clark's work on *Bandstand*, journalist Ann Oldenburg asserted, "He deserves credit for doing something bigger than just putting on a show." *Los Angeles Times* writer Geoff Boucher goes further, stating that "with the exception of Elvis Presley, Clark was considered by many to be the person most responsible for the bonfire spread of rock & roll across the country in the late 1950s." He became a "primary force in legitimizing rock & roll," adds Michael Uslan. The host, however, simplified his contribution: "I played records, the kids danced, and America watched."

In addition to his work on *American Bandstand*, Dick also branched out into other areas of television beginning with game shows. The first show he hosted, *The Object Is*, lasted only one year. He then took over as host for *Missing Links*, which had moved to ABC from rival network NBC, where it was hosted by Ed McMahon, who was later to be Dick's cohost on TV's *Bloopers and Practical Jokes*. It wasn't until 1973 when Clark became the host of *The \$10,000 Pyramid* that lightning struck again, and Dick's charm made its mark, winning three Emmy awards for best game show host. He retired from the show in 1988, but did return as a guest in later versions of the show. He hosted several other game shows throughout the 1990s.

## HOSTING THE NATIONAL PARTY

One of the things that Dick Clark will be most remembered for is *Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve*. The annual countdown to the New Year, featuring the hottest musical acts and shots of revelers, began broadcasting live from New York's Times Square in 1972. ABC only preempted the special once, in 1999, as news coverage of the millennium dominated the airwaves. Dick was still included as a "correspondent" in Times Square, and was able to continue the tradition of calling the countdown. He received a Peabody Award for his coverage of the millennium celebration. Dick continued to host the show every year except for the 2004-05 show when he was recovering from a stroke, which had happened in early December 2004. Later in 2005 he announced that he would return to Times Square with the addition of Ryan Seacrest as co-host. He also announced that Seacrest would take over as host when he retired or was unable to continue. Dick Clark's fans and stroke survivors praised him as a role model for people dealing with post-stroke recovery. He continued to co-host New Year's Rockin' Eve along with Seacrest through 2011.



On a personal note, one of my favorite holiday memories is watching the 2010-11 show with my family and my then 90-year-old grandmother, who got tears in her eyes and commented on how it warmed her heart to see Dick and his wife share a New Year kiss after the ball dropped. It would be the last time she took part in our family New Year celebration before beginning to succumb to dementia.

Dick Clark passed away on April 18, 2012 in Santa Monica, California, after suffering a heart attack while in the hospital for a surgical procedure. He was cremated and his ashes were scattered in the Pacific Ocean by his family.

Maybe it was the first time you saw your favorite group on *American Bandstand*, or watching him on *Pyramid*, or having him join you and your family for New Years Eve via television... Although it's impossible to sum up Dick Clark and his contributions to the entertainment industry in two short pages, I've tried to touch on the highlights of his career, and, I hope, encourage you to stop and think about a time when "America's Oldest Teenager" influenced your life. **MB**



# DJ Vehicle Preparedness

## A LARGE LOAD OF TIPS AND TRICKS FOR TRAVELING ENTERTAINERS

By Mike “Dr. Frankenstand” Ryan

**W**ith the arrival of digital DJing, the need for a Freightliner to transport our DJ equipment has gone the way of the Smart Car. But there are still some of us who still use pickups and vans. The following article looks at tires, theft and break-ins, gig-goodies, emergencies, creature comforts, and vehicle maintenance tips, all to help you protect and “pimp” your DJ ride.

### TIRES

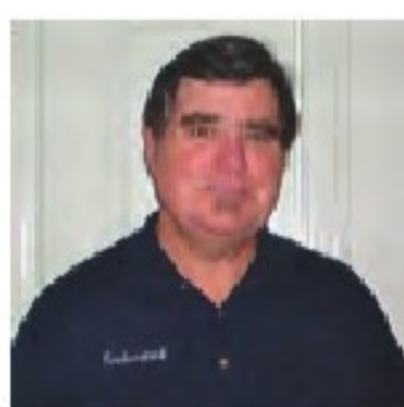
It's 2:00 AM; you just finished the better part of a day DJing, you're exhausted, have a long ride home, and you still have to unload your equipment. All of a sudden a loud POP wakes you out of your driving stupor and you know it's flat tire. It's happened to me. Or, while driving into a parking lot your tire hits a curb and explodes. That has also happened to me.

I contacted Tireman for his advice. His answers were pretty slick:

**Tireman:** “Most modern trucks and vans come with eight-lug, eight-ply tires on 16-inch rims.” (I bought my van from a car rental company and it came with 5-lug, 6-ply tires on 15-inch rims). Tireman suggested I put on eight-ply tires for added strength, which I did, and haven't had a tire problem since. I'm not sure what plys are, but I like 'em!

Tireman explains: “It's all about the overall gross vehicle weight and load capacity. Vehicle computers set the shift and gear ratios to match the tires.”

20-inch, low-profile tires are very popular today, but Tireman says they can make for an expensive ride: “They have little sidewall flex, which can cause sidewall cracking and excessive wear and are more susceptible to blowouts. With bad roads you could pop your tire and break your rim, and 20-inch rims are expensive (\$1,100 to \$2,500



Mike Ryan started out writing for news radio, and has been a SoCal DJ on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike. He is also the inventor/owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands. He is currently the president of the San Diego Chapter of the ADJA.

dollars for a set), they last half as long, and are bumpier than hell... but they sure look good.”

More importantly to DJs, switching to a lower profile tire lowers your load capacity. One option to deal with this is an air bag suspension, which allows you to lower and raise your vehicle. This could come in handy in those parking garages with low ceilings. But there's a trade-off with an air bag suspension: it's expensive and requires custom installation, including an onboard air tank and compressor.

### THEFT

DJ vehicles full of equipment are tempting targets. DJ Albert Roman told me that once, after a late night gig, two men with guns approached him and told him they were taking his equipment...and they did!

Imagine it's 2:00 AM, you just pulled into your driveway, exhausted from DJing (my feet are usually barking) and you still have to unload. However you have an early morning gig the next day and are debating about unloading. Not a good idea.

But if you just absolutely, positively have to leave equipment in your vehicle here's a few tricks to try to protect it.

First keep the inside dome light off at night. Why give anyone a chance to see what's inside? (I also do this when stopping to get something to eat after a gig.)

If at home, back your vehicle up against the garage door. Although this could be a tip-off to a “smart” crook, you can take another step to discourage theft. Take 6' x 12' pieces of black fleece material (equipment blanket) and cover your equipment. Because the fleece is flat black, it makes the equipment “invisible” to someone looking in your windows. All they see is black, especially at night, making a break-in less likely.

### EMERGENCIES

Here in California, it's smart to always be prepared for earthquakes, but having an emergency kit in your vehicle could apply to all kinds of disasters. Check out earthquake survival kits at [www.sunset-survival.com](http://www.sunset-survival.com). Also, Costco sells the American Preparedness Emergency Backpack Kit.

If you choose to make a kit yourself be sure you include at least the following: a first aid kit, food (energy) bars, pouches of water, water-proof matches or lighter, a utility knife, whistle, AM/FM radio with batteries, a pair of leather-palm gloves, a dust mask, rope and any prescription medication you might need.

Other basic emergency must-haves: a car cell phone charger, road flares, chains (in extreme weather areas), a flashlight that uses the same batteries as your wireless mic, jumper cables and a DC-AC converter. In my glove box I always carry extra batteries, aspirin, an extra pair of glasses, suntan lotion, matches and paper napkins.

Just in case I get stuck in my van for an extended period of time, I carry an insulated bright red snow jacket and a warm blanket. I've come mountain roads during a snow storm and noticed abandoned cars off the side of the road—even in California.

One of my favorite pieces of emergency equipment is a set of several long plastic cable ties (zip ties). More than a couple of times, cable ties have saved my rear. During one trip, it started raining hard and my old van windshield wipers decided to break. I took a cable tie and was able to MacGyver together the wiper arm hinge in a way that worked all the way home.

### GIG GOODIES

Over the years as a DJ, you're bound to come up with unique solutions



to a lot of little and sometimes not-so-little problems. I have three interlocking 2' x 2' foam floor pads tucked away in my van; they help when you're standing for hours on hard floors. I also have a folding chair for fairs, car show etc. where sitting down for breaks is ok and very necessary.

**Extension cords:** Beyond the necessary cords for audio and lighting gear, I carry a variety of orange cords in several lengths. I also have a couple of green cords for hiding in gardens or grass. You can't have enough extension cords.

I also carry a couple lengths of plastic floor cord covers for when gaffer tape won't do the job. And speaking of cords, I carry a variety of bungee cords—you never know when they can come in handy.

A roll of plastic shrink wrap comes in handy if you have a balancing act of equipment piled up on your cart. The wrap is especially useful for a difficult load-in and or up and down hills. I also have several short, black-painted 2" x 4"s stashed away, which I sometimes use to prop up stand legs on grass or dirt, or to balance stands on hills.

### CREATURE COMFORTS

My brother drives a lot on his job and he likes creature comforts. He sent me a video pointing out his tips. First on his list: "Don't forget to have your alcohol hand sanitizer." Not a bad idea; I hate sharing colds with guests. He also has a four-foot long, home made, padded cloth

"tube" he wraps around his body and use it as arm rest. He looks like he's sitting in a NASCAR racing seat. He also glued small mirrors onto both side view mirrors, and also added two additional mirrors to view at a 45% angle outward.

A lot of new trucks come with "tow packages," and my bro keeps his on to keep his RPMs "kicked up a notch, kinda like a shift kit."

Take a plastic cell phone holder and attach it to your dashboard for easy, hands-free access. My brother also keeps a hands-free phone (set to speaker) attached to the sun visor, plus a clipboard with lots of Post-It notes on it: "Important notes go on the corner of the rear view mirror."

### MAINTENANCE

When I go to change my oil I really hate to be pestered about changing my air filter, transmission filters, radiator fluid, etc. But engine fluids really are the lifeblood of your ride. If you don't do anything else to your car/truck/van **CHANGE THE OIL**. Worse case schedule: Change with each new season or four times a year, and more if you drive a lot (3000 to 5000 miles). If you haven't changed the radiator, brake, or transmission fluids since you "can't remember when," **DO IT NOW**. Clean fluids = a clean ride.

Bottom line, no matter what you drive, as a mobile DJ, you depend heavily upon your vehicle to get you and your gear to and from your gigs. So take care. Without our vehicles we aren't Mobile! **MB**

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# A New Source for Versatile Sound

WITH THE STAGESOURCE FAMILY, LINE 6 INTRODUCES A NEW LEVEL OF VERSATILITY TO POWERED SPEAKERS

By Jake Feldman

When most think of Line 6 products, they immediately think of their wireless transmission products and also their guitar/instrument amps, pedals, and effects. Now, by popular demand it seems, these folks have come up with a solution for DJs asking for a better way to produce sound. Enter the L3ta full-range, 3-way loudspeaker and L3s, a dual 12" bi-amped subwoofer module. The system they sent me to test drive consisted of two full-range tops (L3t) and one subwoofer (L3s).

## FIRST GLANCE

Aesthetically speaking, the StageSource L3t and the L3s are unlike any other powered cabinets on the market. The tops are taller and create a line-array look, while the sub is thinner, yet deeper—with both models carrying a sleek black rounded corner design and also the flexibility to have the sub on its side or standing on its end.

## UNDER THE HOOD

While the looks of the system are phenomenal, DJs really want to know what's inside the cabinets and how it applies to them. In total, the system I test drove had around 4,000 watts of peak

power, with 2,800 of those being attributed to the tri-amp tops and 1,200 on the low-end frequencies. However, with the events I tried the system out on (two weddings, one coffee house band gig, one corporate event, and one youth event), I didn't need to push the system to anywhere near the peak performance power.

The L3t's are powerful, 3-way, full-range speaker modules comprised of two 10" low-frequency drivers and one high-frequency driver, with ratings of 655 watts (peak) for each of the low frequency drivers, and 175 watts (peak)

for the high frequency driver. Sonically, the boxes are meant to reproduce every discernible frequency in either pre-recorded playback (DJs) and live sound (keyboards are especially tough on cabinets) with crystal-clear accuracy; this is likely why Line 6 opted for a 3-way cabinet instead of the standard two-way design of most powered speakers.

Functionality is key for these speakers. They have the most bells and whistles of any powered cabinet I have had the pleasure of reviewing. In fact, not only can the controls and modes on the sides and back of the unit be manually adjusted on the cabinet, the unit can all be connected via Line 6's innovative (and remarkably cool) L6 LINK system, which utilizes their new digital console, the StageScape™ M20d, described as "the world's first smart mixer." (Note: L6 LINK

also works between StageSource speakers, even when they are not connected to the StageScape M20d mixer; in this setting, it automatically pans stereo signals between left and right speakers and sums stereo signals for monitors or subs, if only 1 sub is in use.) Having seen one in action at NAMM in January, I can tell you first hand that this system (an "ecosystem" as they call it) will make major waves in the areas of live sound and DJ performance in the next couple of years.

## EVEN MORE FEATURES

The modes to which the L3t can be set include: Reference/PA (as mains), Playback (for DJ setups), floor monitor, electric guitar (as a quasi-amp), acoustic guitar, and keyboards. In addition to this, there are two more mixable inputs (XLR and 1/4") with

L3t



L3s





full-band level control (and individual channel feedback suppression) on the side of the unit for those times when the groom's cousin absolutely must play "Freebird" on an acoustic guitar while singing. What's more, when he asks for "a little 'verb, man," you can oblige, because each channel has its own reverb and echo controls. The unit also has main inputs in the back (including line level XLR, 1/4", and stereo RCA) that also feature an overall feedback suppression function.

The L3t can also be a floor monitor, with an insanely cutting-edge, onboard gyro-like technology that automatically senses when the speaker is turned sideways and flips the acoustical mode into that of a floor monitor. To make the cabinet work well, Line 6 even installed "kick-stands" to make sure those using the floor monitors have the sound aimed right at their ears.

The L3s packs two 12" subwoofers into its 34" x 17" x 23" frame. Along with that, there is easy selectability on the L3s's onboard crossover, allowing the operator to choose between four settings (80Hz, 100Hz, 120Hz, and Off) for desired bass response and frequency detection. The cabinets feature XLR and 1/4" inputs and XLR throughs; you also can use the L6 LINK system to control the unit.

## PERFORMANCE

It is often the characteristics of a speaker's reproduction of voice that is the most critical for DJ work, considering those all-important words being spoken during a heartfelt toast, for example. With that in mind, the easily-selectable feedback suppression and mode functions on the L3t really make the cabinet the "multi-tool" of the powered speaker realm. In all the acoustic settings where I tried the system, all could hear the words being spoken, and I even had a little extra headroom to handle the bridesmaid who was nervous held the microphone three feet from her mouth.

On the low end, I was impressed by the L3s, which I couldn't get to fail (try as I might) during my youth event. In this day and age where apparently no audiophiles are left in the mastering process of pop and hip-hop music, frequencies are often atrocious and "dirty"—and the L3s handled these like a true champion.

I was pleasantly surprised at the versatility of the whole system, when it came to my live sound event that featured an acoustic guitar and drum-based group in a coffee shop setting. I could easily handle all their requests for sonic tweaking, without resorting to any outboard processors.

## VERIDICT

To reiterate, the StageSource system is really much like a multi-tool when it comes to its versatility and the scope of the events for which the system is useful. I also really liked the sound that was produced from the three-way L3t's. They filled the space with crisp sound on all frequencies, and when I needed more, there was more available. My time with the Line 6 StageSource series was a definitely positive one. In front of crowds of a few hundred (weddings and corporate events) or a few (50 people in a coffee shop), the system impressed both me and my clients, which as Martha would say, is a good thing. **MB**

[www.line6.com](http://www.line6.com)

# Dam Good for Your Ears

## PERSONALIZED HEARING PROTECTION

By Ken Heath

We all have interests outside of DJing, and one of mine is firearms. I really enjoy attending gun shows and looking at all the cool stuff being displayed above and beyond the expected. Sometimes I even see things that might be useful in the DJ world, and EarDam products are just such a thing.

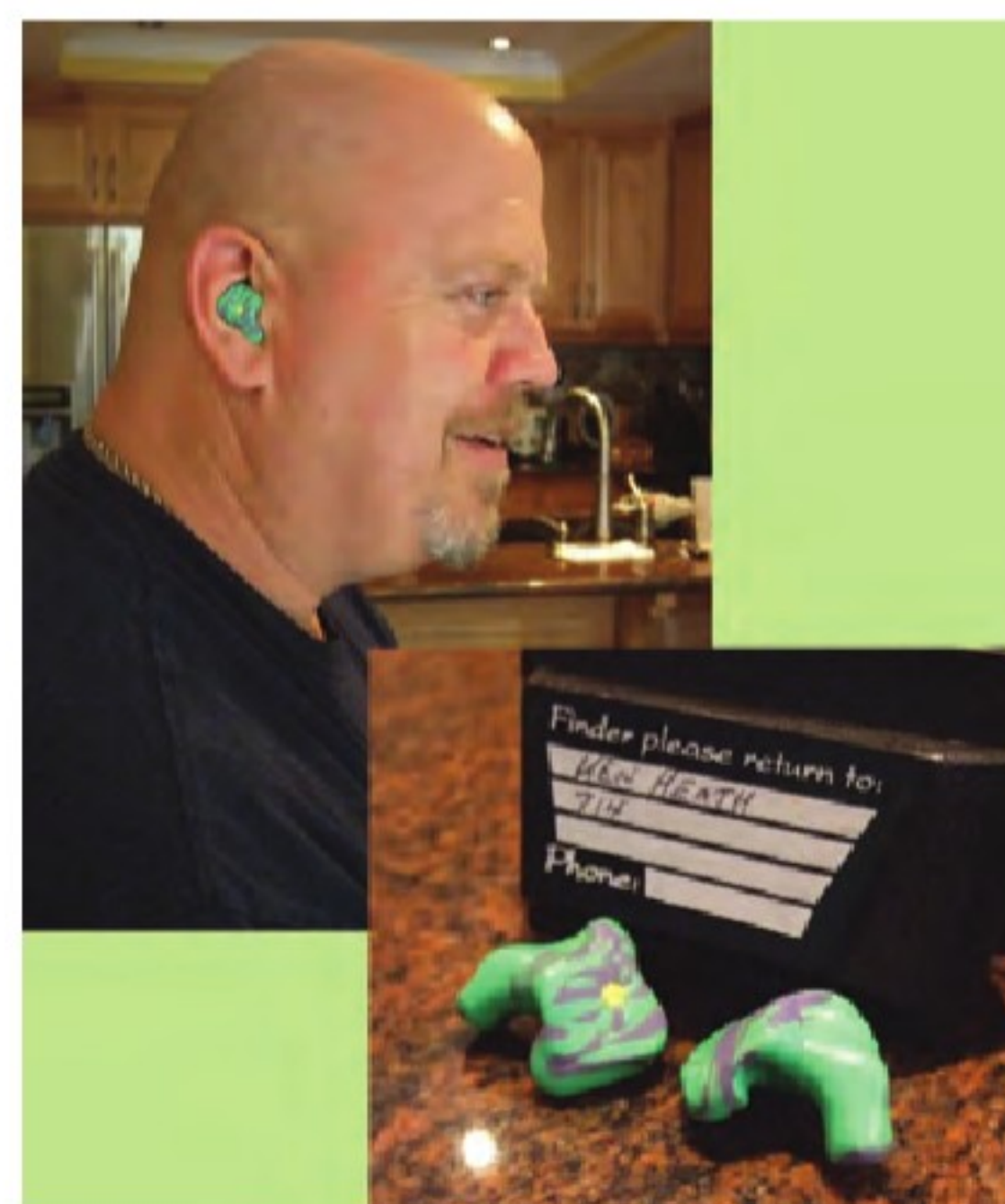
EarDam is an independent company that provides an excellent product and personalized service like the old days: They make custom-fit earplugs, in-ear monitors for singers, and some of the most amazing headphones you've ever heard. All fit specifically to YOUR ears.

I drove out to the home of Al and Linda Hodges, armed with unprotected ears and a camera, and came back with a set of custom-fit, custom-colored earplugs that afford about 33db of noise reduction, and look really cool as you can see.

First, a small foam plug with a string is gently inserted into the ear canal, this keeps the earplug material from contacting, and bonding to (yikes!) the eardrums. You can choose from several colors to mix and match—a single color or a swirling celebration of color, it's up to you. The colors are mixed with a hardening catalyst and loaded into a syringe-like device and pumped into your ears. This feels weird, as they fill up your ears, sound gets shut out and you soon realize how well the EarDam Custom Earplugs are going to protect your hearing. After about ten minutes, Al pulls them from your ears and buffs them smooth so they are perfectly comfortable, then seals them so they will last for many, many uses.

I gotta tell ya, these things are outstanding. I've worn them while playing excessively loud music, at a live band concert, and on several occasions while using power tools, and they performed wonderfully. Imagine mixing a set at the club without a monitor screaming in your face and without damaging your hearing. And if you work in sound reinforcement these could come in handy, big time. Plus, they're comfortable enough to sleep in.

If you desire headphones or in-ear monitors, there are a few more steps involved while your ear impressions are made into some amazing sounding units that also block out background noise. You can contact Al and Linda, or check the website to see where they'll be next, and find out how to get yourself a cool new set of EarDam custom-fit earplugs. Keep on rockin'. **MB**



[www.eardam.com](http://www.eardam.com)



# Liberating the Light

THE FREEDOM SERIES FROM CHAUVET CUTS SOME MORE CORDS FROM YOUR KIT

By James Humphrey

**F**reedom is what CHAUVET is offering DJs with their latest range of innovative LED fixtures. The freedom to place LED lighting anywhere on their rig, or in fact anywhere within a venue, without the need to run a single power or control cable.

The brand new Freedom Par and Freedom Strip Mini feature built-in rechargeable batteries, wireless DMX and flexible hanging/floor-standing brackets, which means that they can be positioned literally anywhere and still run synchronised light-shows controlled from the DJ booth.

The Freedom Par features a total of 198 5mm LEDs (60 red, 69 green and 69 blue) arranged in a traditional circular

pattern and mounted in a "flat par" casing behind a protective Perspex screen. This flat par unit is then mounted, via an adjustable angling bracket, to a larger base unit. The base is fitted with rubber feet and so, for up-lighting, the unit can simply sit directly on the floor next to a wall with the light-source either projected directly upward or angled in towards the wall. There are plastic thumbscrews so that a particular angle can be locked into place, and a clip is also provided to secure the flat par section to the base if the angling feature isn't being used. The whole unit is then fitted with a hanging bracket, again secured by two plastic thumbscrews, which can be used to mount the fixture to a T-bar or trussing system for projecting downwards if required.

The Freedom Strip Mini is an LED batten, which measures just under 20 inches wide and makes use of 192 (64 red, 64 green and 64 blue) LEDs. It is supplied with two mounting brackets, one for each end, which are secured in place by plastic thumbscrews. These can allow the unit to sit directly on the floor, or be attached to a pair of hanging clamps in order to secure it to a rigging bar. This flexible fixture is ideal for up-lighting purposes, but could also be used for dance floor lighting, either mounted horizontally across a goalpost, or vertically on the upright portion of a lighting stand. What's more, the mounting brackets are inset at each end of the bar, which means that multiple units can be

positioned side by side, with the same gap between the blocks of LEDs within each bar as those in adjacent bars. This means that a continuous run of LEDs could be positioned along a wall or across a rig.

Both units feature four status LEDs to show battery charge: 25%, 50%, 75% & 100% as well as a four-segment LED display menu interface for mode selection and DMX addressing. IEC input and output sockets are included, for the connection of power for charging and also to allow the use of the fixtures for prolonged periods of time. XLR input and output (as well as a separate master/slave output) sockets are also provided for connecting Freedom series fixtures to regular wired DMX units.

## CHARGED UP

Power is provided by an internal (non-replaceable) rechargeable lithium-ion battery. The marketing blurb promises "Eight hours maximum" run time and, although I've not had chance to leave the review samples running for that long, the 100% battery status LED went out after I left them running for around two hours, which fits in with a total battery life of eight hours. Obviously the actual run time will vary based on the type of use; however I think that we can be confident that the batteries will certainly have no problem in covering even the longest of evening parties.

On the other side of the coin, the recharge time is six hours; therefore as long as you remember to plug them in when you get home on Friday night, they'll definitely be ready when you head back out again for Saturday's gig!

## MAINTAINING CONTROL

For control, the Freedom series fixtures use Chauvet's D-Fi 2.4 GHz system, which allows control signals to be received and transmitted wirelessly. If you want to control a set of these lights via DMX, you can either run a cable from your lighting controller to the first fixture, which will then transmit a wireless DMX signal to the other fixtures in the room, or purchase one of Chauvet's dedicated D-Fi 2.4 GHz Wireless DMX Transmitters and set it up next to your controller.





Two different DMX control modes are available: a simple three-channel mode offering 0-100% dimming for each of the three LED colours; and also a feature-packed four-channel mode. In addition to independent RGB dimming, this mode also offers remote selection of a number of pre-programmed chase patterns, with variable speed, including a unique "quadrant effect." This divides the LEDs of each color into four independently controlled blocks, which means that effective chase patterns can be generated from a single fixture. Really impressive effects can be achieved when multiple units are used together.

The Freedom wireless system can also be used for cable-free master/slave operation, and if you already own any of Chauvet's COLORstrip fixtures, you'll be pleased to know that they are also master/slave compatible with these new units. Obviously you'll need to run XLR cables from the wireless fixtures to the cabled units, however positioning one Freedom series product at the beginning of each run of fixtures will remove the need to run a signal cable across doorways, etc.

### DREAM COME TRUE

My initial concerns when I found out about the Freedom series were that the fixtures would be very heavy and wouldn't be bright enough for professional up-lighting purposes, but I was pleasantly surprised. While they do weigh a little more than comparable wired fixtures, at 7.7 lbs. (Par) and 6.2 lbs. (Strip), they are light enough to rig comfortably and carry safely, even cased and in multiples. In terms of brightness, both fixtures offer output similar to other 5mm LED based products and are perfectly capable of producing striking swathes of colored light across walls, ceilings or dance-floors.

The Chauvet Freedom series represents a true breakthrough in DJ up-lighting technology. These cleverly designed, flexible and affordable fixtures offer DJs a new level of creativity, while also drastically reducing set-up and tear-down times. No cables to tape down before a gig or coil up afterwards—a DJ's dream come true. **MB**

[www.chauvetlighting.com](http://www.chauvetlighting.com)

## Sharp Beam Cuts Through

One of the hottest lighting trends today is the use of intense beams that are capable of cutting through color washes and a roomful of other effects. Now, **American DJ** is bringing such blazingly brilliant beams to lighting designers, night-spots and entertainers everywhere with the introduction of the **Inno Color Beam LED**, a compact, 12-inch tall, high-performance 108-watt LED moving head with intense beams that dominate everything in its vicinity.

Featuring 36 high-quality CREE LEDs—8 Red, 10 Green, 10 Blue and 8 White—the Inno Color Beam LED mixes colors with unrivaled smoothness and precision, and also has the capability to go all white. Its 13.5° beam angle is narrow enough to penetrate virtually any performance environment with vivid swathes of colored light. And with an attractive MSRP of \$1,119.95, this professional-quality fixture will allow virtually any entertainer, club owner or stage show to take their visual presentation to the next level with high-impact beam effects.

Along with its intense beam, the Inno Color Beam LED offers a wide range of professional features, including: a strobe/pulse effect, with random strobing from slow to fast; 630° pan and 220° tilt; 33 built-in color macros, 0–100 percent dimming; stepper motors with micro-stepping; 3-pin XLR in/out; and an easy-to-navigate four-button DMX LED display located on the rear panel.

The Inno Color Beam LED can be operated in three different modes: Sound-Active, Master-Slave, or DMX-512. When in Sound-Active or Master/Slave modes, it moves to its own exciting internal programs to create instant lightshows. In addition to full DMX control, the unit is also compatible with American DJ's easy-to-use UC3 controller (sold separately), which gives non-DMX users the ability to turn the unit on/off and navigate through the various settings. Multiple Inno Color Beam LEDs can be daisy-chained together via the unit's IEC AC in/out connectors to cover venues and stages of all sizes.

For all its visual excitement, the Inno Color Beam LED consumes very little energy, drawing just 110 watts of electricity at maximum use. Maintenance costs will be kept to a minimum as well, since the unit's 36 long-life 3-Watt LEDs have a rating of 50,000 hours. The Inno Color Beam LED can run all night without duty cycles, thanks to its CREE LEDs and built-in fan. The unit includes multi-voltage operation: AC 100–240V, 50/60Hz.

Designed for easy portability and packing a powerful punch for its size, the compact and lightweight fixture measures 12"L x 10.5"W x 6.75"H and weighs only 13 lbs. Users can easily attach the provided Omega hanging clamp for worry-free mounting and optimum positioning. **MB**

[www.americandj.com](http://www.americandj.com)





# Tightening Control

AMERICAN AUDIO AIMS THE UPDATED VMS 4.1 SQUARELY AT MOBILES

By Michael Buonaccorso, Jr.

**C**ontrollerism is here, and it's here to stay. With several new offerings from almost every equipment company on the planet, choosing a controller may seem like quite a task. Enter the American Audio VMS 4.1.

The 4.1 is a highly advanced DJ controller that was introduced as an improvement over the VMS 4. There are two versions of the controller, optimized to work either with Virtual DJ or Traktor software. We had an opportunity to review the Virtual DJ version, and were very impressed with the results.

## FEATURES MOBILES NEED

With so many controllers in the marketplace, what sets the VMS 4.1 apart from the competition? One word: features. The VMS 4.1 was designed specifically for the mobile DJ, and it shows.

While many controllers feature one microphone input, the VMS features two, both with independent level controls. This is a must for many wedding ceremonies and receptions. It also has several outputs, including XLR—a surprisingly rare output in the controller world—which eliminates the need to carry around an adapter to be able to feed a signal to powered speakers or amps with XLR inputs. It also has two extra channels that can be hooked up to anything, for example, backup CD players. And all channels

with a hard flight case (sold separately, MSRP \$179.95), which included a built-in flip-up laptop stand. The overall footprint of the case is compact, so much so that the case for our backup mixer actually takes up more room in the vehicle. For even more portability, one can opt to carry the 4.1 in the VMS Bag (MSRP \$89.95).

Another nice feature of the VMS 4.1 is that although it comes with an AC adaptor, it can run completely on USB power from a laptop, which is perfect for situations where power may be limited (think outdoor wedding ceremonies and the like). Performance is improved when using the AC adaptor, but in our testing it did not make a huge difference.

Incorporating the VMS 4.1 into a mobile DJ system makes connectivity a breeze, cutting down on set-up time significantly. Other than back-up equipment, all that is needed for a gig is a VMS 4.1, laptop, microphone, and two powered speakers. Long gone are the days of lugging around large metal turntables and heavy amps. With this system, one can unload and start playing in less than ten minutes.

## SOFTWARE SETUP

On the software side of things, American Audio offers two choices: Traktor or Virtual DJ. Our review unit came packaged with Virtual DJ LE, and the unit interfaced flawlessly with the program. Virtual DJ even included a custom skin specifically built for the VMS 4.1. It is worth noting, however, that Virtual DJ LE does not offer some of the more advanced features found in the pro version, such as karaoke or video mixing. The full pro version must be purchased to take full advantage of all Virtual DJ is capable of.

The VMS 4.1 is built to work with both Windows PCs and Macs. We tested our unit with a Mac. While it interfaced flawlessly, the included instruction manual was confusing, and lacked some detail, especially when it came to the Mac. We would like to see American Audio revise their manual the next time around.

Overall, the American Audio VMS 4.1 is a solid buy. If you do purchase this controller, we recommend opting for the hard flight case as well, to keep it protected in transit. Packed with more features than most of the competition, it's a steal at a street price of under \$500 (MSRP \$699.95). **ME**



can act just like a traditional analog mixer by a simple flip of a switch. It also features multiple assignable touch pads, a fully functional mouse pad, an adjustable cross fader, and much more.

In the mobile DJ industry, portability is an important item to consider when purchasing a controller. Portability is definitely one of the main areas the VMS 4.1 shines. Our review unit came

[www.americanaudio.us](http://www.americanaudio.us)



# Pioneer Hits Air and App Store

**Pioneer Electronics (USA) Inc. Professional Sound and Visual Division** has introduced the **XDJ-AERO**, the industry's first **Wi-Fi® DJ system** that can wirelessly play

also lets users record their mixes directly onto a USB storage device in WAV format.

The XDJ-AERO combines two digital players and a mixer into a single slim and stylish unit, taking design cues from Pioneer's highly popular professional CDJ digital players and DJM mixers. The unit also features a smoke-colored acrylic panel, blue and white LED illumination, and low-profile jog platter and control buttons. (MSRP: \$1,399)

The new version of Pioneer's rekordbox® DJ music management program—as an app for iPhone® and iPod touch®—enables users

to prepare and manage music stored on their portable devices as well as create playlists, make cue/loop point and beat location settings, perform waveform analysis, and more. The organized music in the device can also be wirelessly synched with a computer utilizing the Pioneer rekordbox music management PC software, providing additional convenience.

Pioneer's rekordbox music management software continues to grow in popularity within the DJ community and we're now making it available as an app for iPhone and iPod touch," said David Arevalo, senior marketing manager, Professional Sound and Visual Division for Pioneer Electronics (USA) Inc. "The rekordbox app will make it easy for anyone to organize the music stored on a device so it can be ready for playback on a variety of Pioneer systems."

Much like Pioneer's rekordbox PC software, the rekordbox app makes it fun and easy to prepare songs for DJ playback. The app utilizes graphics similar to the waveforms, bars and buttons found on Pioneer players, so users can simply touch the screen of the device being used to create and customize set points in their music. The new app also features music file browsing with the ability to customize browsing and sorting menus; log and play tracking for saving playlists on the device; and the ability to change the language of the display from among nine languages.

Pioneer's rekordbox DJ music management app is available at no charge from the App Store on iPhone and iPod touch or at [www.itunes.com/appstore](http://www.itunes.com/appstore).

[www.pioneerdjusa.com](http://www.pioneerdjusa.com)



music tracks stored on smart devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptop computers, via its included DJ software. As an added benefit and convenience, the XDJ-AERO can also create its own wireless access point when Wi-Fi isn't available or in range.

Pioneer created a special mobile application for various smart devices that enables wireless connection and transmission of music to the XDJ-AERO. The XDJ-AERO can identify up to four devices as sources for music playback. The system can also access audio tracks on a computer (PC) through the use of the included Pioneer rekordbox® music management software. (More on rekordbox below.)

For added convenience, the system is equipped with audio ports for connecting other sources, and can even be used as a stand-alone two-channel mixer. For creative music playback and unique mixing capabilities, the system offers a new built-in jog control, audio effects and more. Among the built-in effects are Jog Drum, which lets the user launch, scratch and manipulate samples by simply turning or tapping the jog platter; and Pioneer's popular Sound Color Filter on each channel. (Check out the Pioneer website for more on the unit's onboard effects.)

The XDJ-AERO also features two automatic mix functions, Beat Sync and Auto Mix. With Beat Sync, a press of the Sync button synchronizes the music loaded in each player on beat with matching beats per minute (BPM). In the Auto Mix mode, playlists created on a smart device using the special mobile application, computer or USB memory device, are linked together with cross-fade or fade-in/fade-out effects. The system



# Generation 2

Over the past four years, the original Hercules DJ Console RMX has become a benchmark device DJ controllers for PC and Mac available for less than \$300. Thanks to user-friendly controls, an audio interface featuring ample inputs and outputs, and a sturdy metal case, the DJ Console RMX has been adopted by computer-based DJs everywhere.

Hercules now strides forward with the next generation of this device: the **Hercules DJ Console RMX 2**. It is the first controller in its category boasting a high-resolution 96kHz / 24-bit audio interface for Windows (ASIO) and Mac (Core Audio), which a growing number of DJ software applications are supporting.

Inputs and outputs include: two balanced XLR outputs; two RCA outputs; two stereo connectors (6.35 mm) for headphones; four RCA inputs for mixing two external stereo sources, with two Line/Phono switches; and



one balanced microphone input (XLR / 1/4" combo).

The DJConsole RMX 2 continues in its elder sibling's footsteps with a solid, road-worthy metal case. Compact (13.8" x 9.85" top panel) and light (5.7 lbs.) it is ideally suited for mobile DJs. (A carry bag is included.)

The DJConsole RMX 2 includes a myriad of control features, including pressure-sensitive jog wheels for scratching and two sets of four back-lit velocity-sensitive pads for controlling loops, effects, samples and cue points. The pads can trigger instant controls or, by varying their velocity, can control the sound amplitude. A rotary encoder with each set of pads gives them even more functionality. Five faders and 10 rotary pots, in 14-bit MIDI mode, offer precise mixing. The crossfader can be replaced with a Mini-Innofader® control.

The DJConsole RMX 2 will be supplied with two DJing software apps: DJUCED™ 40 degrees and VirtualDJ® 8 LE. **ME**

[www.hercules.com](http://www.hercules.com)



# The Future of DJing

INTELLIGENTLY EMBRACE NEW TECHNOLOGY AND REAP THE REWARDS

By Richard McCoy

The mobile DJ industry has changed tremendously since the mid-1960s when I first started in business. In the early days, things were much simpler and the clients expectations from the DJ were uncomplicated. The equipment of that time just included a belt-driven turntable, vacuum tube amplifier (40W) and two small speakers. The 45-RPM record was the common medium of the time.

Today's technology has furnished the mobile DJ with a vast array of tools and devices to enhance their performances. While each new advancement in music technology empowers the DJ to offer the client greater value for their dollar, it is still only a tool for the DJ to use.

At the same time the clients' expectations and demands have kept pace with the latest technologies available to the tech-savvy DJ.

New technologies in our industry have always been an exciting challenge to be embraced by the DJ community; but it can be difficult and expensive to change old habits in order to implement the new technology even if the resulting outcome is productive for the user. I've experienced many technology changes over my career as an engineer and DJ that have benefited my business and resulted in a better experience for the

client (plus higher profits).

## BACK...TO THE FUTURE

Future technology will have the same impact on tomorrow's shows as a previous technology has produced in the past. Several major technology introductions yesterday have resulted in improved performances and equipment reliability. Some major technologies introductions to date have included:

- The LP record
- Direct-drive turntables
- Cassette tape and compact discs
- Powered speakers
- Recordable compact disc
- Recordable mini disc
- MP3 music and video files
- LED lighting

The computer and MIDI controller have been the greatest tools available since the introduction of the CD. The integration of a computer into the modern DJ system has enabled DJs to provide a vast variety of services and enhancements to their performances. MIDI controllers and computer systems have empowered DJs to improved performances and access to an enormous amount of music files and features. The computer will continue to provide additional tools to supplement your presentation while making your job is easier with less equipment.

Some of the new technologies that will be available in the future for the DJ market will likely include:

- Configurable touchscreens for mixers, controllers, lighting and audio
- Improved digital wireless lighting and speakers
- 3-D projectors and DJ mixers (consoles and systems)
- Automatic sound adjustments (equalizing) for speakers
- Voice activated controllers and systems
- Wireless remote system controls
- Client and guest input via smartphones and/or internet in real time
- System control similar to that used in the Wii gaming system or iPad.

For example: The DJ will place a speaker in a location and his or her computer will automatically equalize the system for the environment. Even as the room fills with people and changes the acoustic characteristics, the computer will automatically maintain the proper equalization for the environment. No adjustment by the DJ will be required and the system will produce the perfect sound. [ For a step in this direction, check out our review of the new StageSource multi-mode speaker system from Line 6, on page 50. -Ed. ]





Lighting systems will be configured using laser pointing devices. Wireless, multicolored LED or laser lights will be placed around the location. For set up, the DJ will simply point a laser to the position he desires light to illuminate and then point the laser the next position to be illuminated. The computer will adjust the movement and or color of the lights as programmed. Color patterns and movements will be preprogrammed and remembered by the computer to be retrieved at any time.

The DJ's console will consist of a three-dimensional touch-screen to control all aspects of the show. Besides music, the DJ will be able to provide large-screen, three-dimensional music videos, presentations, games, and personalized productions for the client. The console will also have the ability to control all the lighting and displays for the show. Smithson Martin ([www.smithsonmartin.com](http://www.smithsonmartin.com)) has already stepped into the arena with some futurist products. Their user-configurable Emulator touch-screen can manage all aspects in a contemporary music and video show.

In addition, DJs will have the ability to receive requests and updates directly from their audiences' smartphones and wireless devices. RequestYourSong.Com has developed a program that allows the audience to request music and karaoke songs via smartphones directly to the DJ. DJs would also have the ability to draw upon a large music library hosted on a server in some remote location via wireless connection. Virtual DJ already has

a NetSearch function that allows DJs all over the world to share music and videos in real time.

### OVERLOADED?

With all this being said, it is challenging for a DJ to implement and experience all the new technologies that are becoming available now and will be in the near future. There is a level of understanding required to allow use of modern electronic devices and systems in the entertainment industry. I have encountered a reluctance among many DJs to implement new technologies, due high cost and reliability issues. We feel comfortable with time-tested products and procedures that have always worked for us in the past. However, I have also learned that many equipment problems experienced by DJs are the result of user-created glitches, rather than equipment or system malfunction. Equipment manufacturers have gone to great lengths to provide training and tech support to ensure their products will perform as advertised. But it is important for the DJ to fully understand the functionality and limits of their equipment to ensure proper operation.

As the technology advances, and I continue contributing this column to *Mobile Beat*, it is my intention to provide DJs with a simple and understandable approach to equipment use, so they can provide a rewarding experience for their clients. Future articles will describe cutting-edge equipment, systems and technology approaches to help DJs migrate to new platforms. I hope you will embrace the future of DJing and benefit from my advice. **MB**

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# Book More Brides with Facebook

## HOW TO GO FROM “LIKE” TO PROSPECT TO BOOKING

By Stephanie Padovani

**W**hen it comes to using Facebook as a marketing tool, most DJs are failing miserably.

56% of Facebook pages have less than 256 fans, and the pages of most DJ businesses aren't even close to that number. Since only 17% of your fans actually see your posts, the efforts of most businesses on Facebook are almost worthless. (Stats reported by AllFacebook.com.)

It's easy to blame the over-hyped social media and fickle brides for this lack of success, but here's the truth: your brides are on Facebook. At last check, there are over 1,459,740 engaged females aged 21-32 on Facebook in the US alone, and the average user spends 55 minutes on Facebook. Yet most wedding vendors get ZERO leads from it.

The key to attracting brides and booking weddings with Facebook lies in finding those brides, getting their attention, and turning them into real leads you can follow up with. In order to get wedding leads from Facebook, you must first get brides onto your Facebook page, and from there into your sales funnel. (That's a fancy word for the process you use to turn a lead into a booked gig.)

### STEP 1: FIND OUT WHERE YOUR TARGET BRIDES ARE HANGING OUT

Where are the brides in your local market spending their Facebook time? What pages and groups are they fans and members of?

Likely hot spots for local brides on Facebook are the popular pages of other local wedding vendors. They also typically “like” the Facebook pages of wedding blogs like Style Me Pretty and Green Wedding Shoes.

Be sure you “like” these pages as your Facebook business page, and become a valuable member of the community by asking questions and contributing resources. If they like what you have to say, brides will click through to your page and “like” you.

Make friends (real friends, not just the Facebook kind) with local wedding vendors who have a sizeable following of brides on Facebook. Get them to introduce you and recommend your page to their fan base.

You can also target a Facebook ad campaign by gender, zip code, relationship status (hint: engaged) and even the pages she “likes,” guaranteeing that your ads show up only on the Facebook walls of the brides you want to book.



*Stephanie Padovani is a Hudson Valley, NY wedding blogger, writer and wedding business coach who has owned a successful wedding entertainment company with her husband since 2000. They started Book More Brides to help wedding professionals build thriving wedding businesses...without fighting about price or wasting money on expensive advertising that doesn't work. Visit [BookMoreBrides.com](http://BookMoreBrides.com) to get more wedding business marketing tips.*

### STEP 2: GIVE BRIDES AN INCENTIVE TO LIKE YOUR PAGE

When a bride finally lands on your Facebook page, you need her to “like” it so that you can continue to communicate with her, and for that, you must give her a good reason.

Offer special access, discounts or free goodies that won't be available anywhere else. Facebook allows you to create tabs and photo albums that are only accessible to people who “like” your page. We call this incentive a “Bride Bribe.” A few things brides can't resist: real weddings, unique wedding ideas and how-to advice. You don't have to make this up yourself; you can collect and share other people's content. Whatever you do, make sure you give brides a real, compelling reason to “like” and pay attention to you.

### STEP 3: TURN THOSE VISITORS INTO REAL LEADS WITH AN EMAIL LEAD CAPTURE FORM

You know those cute little email forms you see on websites inviting you to enter your name and email to get something *cool*

**It's not enough to get a bunch of brides to like your page...The real value of Facebook marketing lies in turning those “fans” into real leads.**

and *free*? You can add them to your Facebook page too. Services like Pagemodo make adding a custom tab to your page easy, or you can use the free Static HTML iframe application.

Here's how it works: A bride lands on your Facebook page, then enters her name and email into the form to get a cool freebie. Now you have permission to follow up with her as a bonafide lead.

### PROCEED WITH CAUTION

Don't jump onto someone else's page and promote yourself. It drives brides away and alienates potential partners. Don't try to sell brides on your Facebook page. Use your page as a tool to attract brides, and do your selling in your follow up and on your website. Make sure your Bride Bribe is really something a bride wants. If she doesn't think it's valuable, it doesn't matter how cool you think it is, she's not going to give you her email to get it.

### FACEBOOK REALITY CHECK

It's not enough to get a bunch of brides to like your page; that's just a popularity contest. The real value of Facebook marketing lies in turning those “fans” into real leads you can follow up with and book. You need a strategy geared towards measurable results. Follow the steps outlined above to set up a process for capturing those fans and turning them into booked weddings—then Facebook can become a constant stream of leads for your business. **MB**



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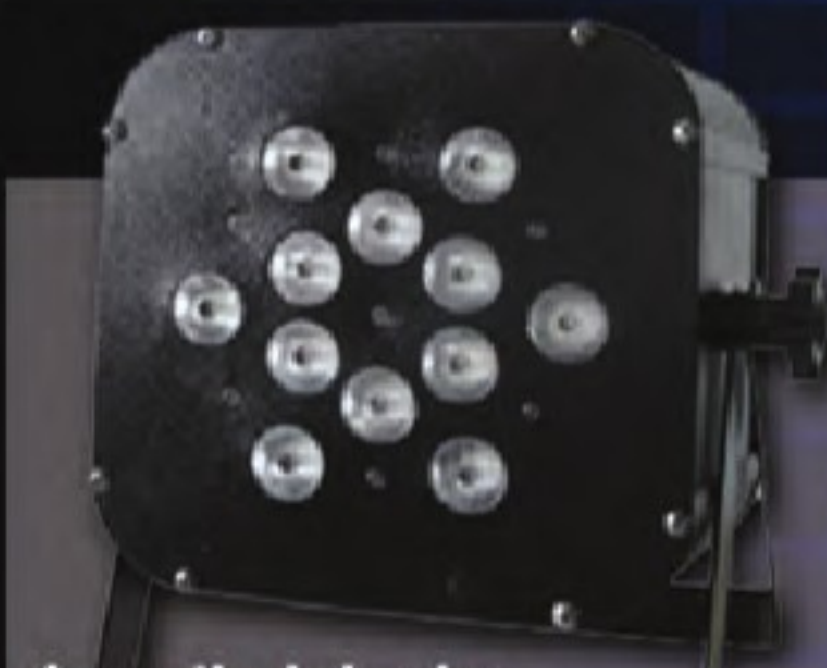
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# The Cheapest Option May Cost You More

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE POSSIBILITIES MIGHT SAVE YOU A LOT

By Mark E. Battersby

**E**very business owner and manager faces choices. All too often however, making the right choice for the mobile entertainment business means selecting the option that costs the least. In far too many cases, the path that costs less, the least expensive option, ends up costing the mobile entertainment operation more either immediately or more in the long run—or both.

Consider those bank fees most of us face. The Jones Bank, for example, offers a business checking account for \$25 per month and \$0.10 per check. Smith Bank, on the other hand, offers a similar account for \$40 per month but only \$0.04 per check.

Obviously, the higher the volume of checks written, the better off a DJ, VJ or KJ will be with the bank providing the cheapest per unit rate. However, while it may be obvious the lowest cost choice depends on volume, finding that breakeven point can be a long trial and error process.

## WHAT IS BEST?

Properly choosing the best and least expensive option means first knowing what the mobile entertainment business actually needs, what it costs, what it could cost as well as the cost of all other available options. To illustrate consider that most basic figure on every business's agenda: financing.

Affordable financing options continue dwindling in today's economy. One result has been more and more DJs, VJs and KJs are using their own money to finance the operation of the mobile entertainment business.

A mobile entertainer who lends his or her own funds to the business may be providing much-needed funding, but it is not without cost. The cost, often called a "lost opportunity" cost, is the amount those funds would have earned for the owner had they remained in savings or invested. Today's low interest rates that savings can earn might substantially reduce that lost opportunity cost but it remains a factor to be considered.

## OPTIONAL INCENTIVE OPTIONS

When evaluating the options available, every mobile entertainer should be wary of incentives. Often incentives—such as free rent or tax breaks—may be masking serious problems. There is usually a good reason why anyone offers incentives and a DJ, VJ, or KJ needs to know what it is before signing on.

Consider those discounts offered by many suppliers for prompt payment or volume purchases. Discounts are actually short-term loans. When a business takes advantage of a prompt payment discount they are, in essence, lending the amount of that payment.

If the credit terms offered are "1/10, net/30," it means if the

customer pays in 10 days, 1% off the invoice price is granted. The customer must of course, pay for the goods no later than 30 days after the date of sale. How much could the customer have earned on the funds used to make an early payment and reap that discount?

Obviously, the more that is purchased from a supplier, the more likely they are to offer discounts—or be compelled to offer discounts—since an option for every mobile entertainment business is to find another, less costly supplier. Always keep in mind you might be sacrificing quality of the goods purchased and getting something that is as well made from a lower-priced supplier.

## TAX DEDUCTIONS ARE OPTIONAL

Income taxes may be one of the two certainties of life but that does not mean that there are no options. While paying taxes is not really optional, every mobile entertainer has the option of deducting some expenses right away or taking smaller, periodic write-off in the current year and for years down the road.

Why would a troubled mobile entertainment business claim an immediate expense deduction for newly acquired business assets in a year when profits are down? Generally, ignoring the Section 179 first year expensing allowance this year and recovering the cost of that asset over a number of years when higher profits, and higher tax brackets, will make even smaller depreciation deduction amounts far more valuable makes more sense.

## PROFITS ARE ALWAYS OPTIONAL

When it comes to increasing profits, there are two options for every mobile entertainer. First, the DJ, VJ or KJ could increase prices. Or, two, costs can be cut.

Remember, however, an increase in price all-too-often results in a drop in gigs and income. What's more, should income drop too far, it may be difficult to generate enough profit to cover operating expenses. Price increases require a careful reading of inflation rates, competitive factors and basic supply and demand for the service offered.

The second option for increasing profits is to lower the mobile entertainment operation's variable costs. This can be accomplished by decreasing costs or selling a service more efficiently. Volume discounts such as those for multiple bookings are a good way to reduce selling costs. Remember, however, taking advantage of discounts, ignoring discounts, and offering discounts, are all options with a cost.

## INSURANCE OPTIONS

When an insurance company drops coverage of an industry or increases premiums across the board, the kneejerk reaction is usually to find another insurance company. Whether to lure the





## The key is to evaluate every option as well as the *consequences* of choosing that option.

number of dealers, promoters and middlemen offer the option of so-called “tax-free” exchanges. Although there is no such thing as a tax-free exchange, swap or trade-in (they are merely tax “deferred”), that does not mean that they are not a viable option.

Deferring the taxes due on the gain realized when obsolete or no longer needed business assets are sold is a decision that might appear to be a no-brainer. After all, not paying tax is a good thing, right?

When any business asset is swapped or exchanged rather than sold for another, the amount that can be deducted or written-off via depreciation does not increase. Because the asset the business traded-up to has the same value as the asset swapped, the depreciation write-off is based on the depreciable amount remaining on the books for the old asset plus any cash used to make up the difference. So, no tax bill today, but no increase in depreciation that can be claimed generating smaller deductions this year and into the future.

### OPTIONAL LEASING/BUYING

Another option faced by many mobile entertainment businesses is whether to lease that badly-needed new equipment, computer, POS computer system, vehicle or other business asset or to purchase it. Even when financing was more readily available, leasing was a viable option, but not always.

According to the Equipment Leasing Association of America, a trade association for the industry, over 80% of U.S. companies lease some or all of their equipment. Leasing is an excellent hedge against obsolescence. It can also mean lower monthly payments than with a loan, tax advantages, conserving working capital and avoiding a cash-devouring down payment.

Remember however, with leasing you may pay a higher price over the longer term. Another drawback is that leasing commits the mobile entertainment business to retaining a piece of equipment for a specified period, which can be problematic for a business in flux.

Obviously, choosing the best option for a mobile entertainment business should involve more than selecting the lowest-cost option. As with the lease or buy choice, the key is to evaluate every option as well as the consequences of choosing that option. Properly evaluating your options can help you make the correct decision, a decision that is right for the mobile entertainment business and one that will result in lower costs, smaller tax bills, satisfied suppliers, happy customers and, most importantly, an increasingly more profitable business. **MB**

business away from its present insurance carrier or to replace the insurer that dropped you, enter the company offering lower premiums.

Unfortunately, lower premiums are often a one-year deal, with the insurance company quickly raising its premiums upon renewal. Or, in today's economy, an insurance company may fail because its premiums were too low or its promised protection too broad.

In addition to evaluating insurance options, a mobile entertainer can lower premiums by taking a higher deductible. Many insurance professionals recommend taking higher deductibles on property insurance and putting the money saved toward additional liability coverage instead.

A few hours invested upfront shopping for the best, most appropriate insurance options can save thousands of dollars in premiums or claims down the road. With insurance, keep in mind that you usually get what you pay for. In other words, do not insure against minimal losses, but don't ignore real peril just because coverage carries a hefty premium.

### COUNTING THE LEGAL OPTIONS

Options also exist in the area of professional services. The obvious choice for legal and accounting advice is a competent small firm or sole practitioner. Fees are usually far more economical than those charged by big law or accounting firms. While those big — and expensive law firms — usually have attorneys with expertise in a variety of specialties, the sole practitioner or small firm may require time to become familiar with a client's needs—at the client's expense.

### EQUIPMENT OPTIONS

When it comes to acquiring equipment, fixtures, furniture or even a building to house the mobile entertainment business, a



# Planning Your Operations and Infrastructure

## WHAT SUPPORT DO I NEED TO BUILD MY BUSINESS?

By John Stiernberg

**L**ast time we talked about the difference between your strategic plan and your operating plan. The strategic plan describes the foundation of your business over the next three to five years. Your operating plan answers the question, "How am I going to hit the numbers this year and next?"

What are the key elements of the operating plan beyond my show schedule and expense budget? What pitfalls can I avoid through careful operational planning? What are the functional plan elements that most mobile entertainers fail to reckon with? This article addresses these issues and recommends three action tips for success.

### GOING BEYOND THE BASICS

In many businesses (mobile entertainment and otherwise), the operating plan is simply a budget that shows what revenue is expected and how the money will be spent. Of course that is essential. If you don't do a revenue plan and forecast, you'll never know how much you can afford to spend or how much money you might need to borrow to cover seasonal shortfalls. Those are the basics.

What about those "nice to haves" that are becoming increasingly essential, especially in a competitive entertainment market? What are the critical success factors from an operational standpoint? Here are a few examples of the kinds of things I am talking about.

- Equipment maintenance including vehicles, sound and lights, and office gear
- New music and related licensed media content
- Outsourcing fees for your accountant, publicist, or office assistant
- Capital purchases like a new van or additional stage rig
- Stage clothes and props
- Computer hardware and software
- Insurance
- Rent for office, studio, or storage space

- Travel and registration fees for industry events such as the annual Mobile Beat Conference
- Promotional expenses like mailing list rentals, interactive websites, or video production.

Your operating plan addresses these issues and puts them in perspective with your performing and ongoing sales activities.

### COMMON PROBLEMS CAUSED BY LACK OF PLANNING

Too many creative businesses (including mobile entertainers) fail to allow the time and money needed to stay current and build long-term business. Do these comments sound familiar?

- "I'm too busy to do my contract paperwork let alone plan for next year."
  - "Crunching the numbers is just frustrating. I know I'll never have enough money to hire people or buy new gear, so I just keep doing whatever gigs I can get."
  - "Planning is for the big guys. I just need to get through the fall season and take a few days off at the holidays, then hit it hard again next year."
- These excuses lead to trouble, short-term and long-term. The wise expression goes, "Fail to plan, plan to fail." Here are examples of the consequences of not having an operating plan.
- Coming up short financially. Spending money you don't have and getting behind on bills (including taxes)
  - Losing gigs to competitors with better gear and promotion
  - Burning yourself out by trying to do everything and wondering where it is all headed

Ouch! Don't want to do any of those! So what is the alternative?

### HOW TO AVOID (OR AT LEAST MINIMIZE) THE PITFALLS

What if I really am too busy to plan? How do I get started? Who can help? Your operating plan is an essential element in

your long-term success. Here are three suggestions for how to avoid or minimize the consequences of lack of planning.

• **Action Tip 1:** Consider the alternatives. Get motivated to change. Do you want to be only as good as your worst competitor, or would you rather be better than your best competitor? The great mobile entertainers do the planning and build a team. The others limp along from gig to gig. The choice is yours.

• **Action Tip 2:** Budget time like you budget money. Devote a certain amount per week or month to the operational elements of your business, including the planning part. Make an appointment with yourself to do what needs to be done.

• **Action Tip 3:** Get professional help. No, I'm not necessarily talking about a shrink. I mean a business manager, accountant, business advisor, marketing specialist, computer maven, or some combination of all of the above. As any business grows and prospers, it builds a team of specialists rather than just bolting on more people who "wear many hats."

### HERE'S THE POINT...

Yes, it is important to have a long-term strategic plan. But to get through this year and really succeed, you need an operating plan too. Mobile entertainers are often good at the creative vision but weak at the implementation. That's where the budget, operational details, and support team come in.

Be sure to implement the Action Tips in sequence: 1) get motivated to do the planning, 2) budget your time (not just your money), and 3) get whatever outsourced help you need on the implementation side.

Next time we'll talk more about the most critical areas in which to invest creative time and a little cash, in order to build and sustain your business. In the meantime, best wishes for success in mobile entertainment in 2012! **MB**



John Stiernberg is founder of Stiernberg Consulting ([www.stiernberg.com](http://www.stiernberg.com)). His book **Succeeding In Music: Business Chops for Performers and Songwriters** is published by Hal Leonard Books. Contact John via e-mail at [john@stiernberg.com](mailto:john@stiernberg.com). You can find John on LinkedIn, Plaxo, and Facebook and follow him on Twitter.



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# Don't Let Life Get in the Way

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES: IT'S ALL IN THE ANGLE YOU TAKE

By Paul Kida, The DJ Coach

Here it is, another day, with the pressures mounting up like some insurmountable wall. Do the daily stresses of dealing with a troubled economy, health problems, family situations and a myriad of other problems seem to just drain you emotionally, physically and mentally? Does it seem like the daily grind is doing just that, grinding you down so that it makes getting through each day tough, with little time for happiness? If you have had any of these thoughts, don't despair!

Number one, all of us at one time or another have gone through times of discouragement. It's simply a part of our human existence. Everyone's life ebbs and flows, according to a continual process of decline and then improvement in our circumstances. Yes, life will occasionally throw us a curve or two, or put a wall in the way of where we should be going. However, it is how we deal with these bumps in the road that can make all the difference in whether we stay down or whether we are able to rise above the problems and come out as winners.

I have the privilege of knowing many fine DJs, both here in Colorado as well as across the nation, and it seems like we all have dealt with some type of problem (some huge) at one time or another in our lives. That's just the way life goes, but as I mentioned, what really matters is how we deal with it, or our attitude and mindset.

Here is a perfect real-life example of what I mean. I have a good friend that is a DJ out of state. He was going through some very tough problems. His wife had lost her job and his DJ company was not booking as well as in the past. Coincidentally, I had been talking to another DJ friend going through a similar scenario. However, the ways these two handled their situations ended up as total opposites, with totally different outcomes.

One was looking at his situation as hopeless. He had come to the conclusion that business was slow, the economy was bad, and he just didn't see any reason to press forward with any suggested new improvements, marketing or sales techniques. In spite of much encouragement from many of his DJ friends, his negative feelings resulted in what I considered to be a sad decision. He decided to leave his DJ business and just focus on getting more work from his weekday job. In speaking with him, I could tell he had given up mentally and emotionally, deciding that the only thing to do would be to quit. While respecting his decision, it truly saddened me to lose a member of our DJ community this way.

Back to my other friend who was facing much the same problems. I hate to use an old cliché, "If life gives you lemons, then make lemonade," but that's exactly what happened. Instead of thinking negatively and getting down on life, this DJ displayed an invigoratingly positive attitude. He just




knew that he could turn things around if he put things in a proper perspective, and then took constructive steps to change his situation. He came to the conclusion that some of the problems were simply there to stay, out of his control and had to be dealt with on a daily basis. That being realized, he took a close, systematic look at his business practices, and called a few friends for advice on how they were handling things in this economy. After consulting with them, he could see that he needed to update his marketing and sales procedures, plus there were various other ways that he could make improvements. He started working on things one at a time, with an optimistic attitude and a renewed energy for building his business the best that he could. Instead of giving up, he appreciated that while some things were just beyond fixing, he could work on the things that he could control. Because of this attitude, his business is doing great now.

A positive mental outlook like this is what can help all of us when we hit life's unexpected difficulties. Just remember it happens to everyone at one time or another. It takes that extra bit of effort and belief in yourself to push through the rough times,

but the result of hanging in there is definitely worth it.

I know that it is easier said than done. You may have a hard time getting yourself back on track, but even though it is hard, that is exactly what you have to do to make it through the hard times. Exposure to difficult situations or hard times enables us to be able to help others when they have the same type of problem. Remember, "Stay positive, work together, and never give up!" Don't be afraid to ask others for help or advice, and don't hesitate to give others assistance and encouragement. By maintaining a positive mental outlook and building camaraderie within our DJ circles and associations, we won't let life's problems get in the way of a successful and joyful career.

Please send any comments on this article or suggestions for future articles or questions to [djcoach@mobilebeat.com](mailto:djcoach@mobilebeat.com). 



Paul Kida, The DJ Coach, is a founding member of the Colorado Disc Jockey Association. He owns JAMMCATTS DJ Entertainment ([www.jammcatsdj.com](http://www.jammcatsdj.com)), and is a regular speaker at Mobile Beat DJ Shows.



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# No You Won't...

By Jason Weldon

**“I’ll do it tomorrow.”** Actually, there are hundreds of businesses that operate on the premise that you **WON’T** do it tomorrow. And because most of us always think that we will do it tomorrow, these businesses thrive! So, I am here to tell you that **you won’t do it tomorrow**; that you need to do something **TODAY** that makes you **have to** do it tomorrow.

For many of you reading this, you are part time DJs that would easily go full time tomorrow to better your company. Your customers would be serviced better, your time would be better spent and you would probably have a little more sanity! So why don’t you quit your job, get rid of all the side stuff and/or stop focusing on things that won’t help you do what you want to do?

I know, I know....I don’t know you. I have no idea of all the things you have going on and I can’t possibly understand your situation. And all those things to me are just excuses. It’s about time you start to get yourself positioned to do what it is that you

want to do and start to enjoy this incredible life of yours!

The first step you need to take is making a choice to actually do it and then create the plan to make it happen. Quitting your job tomorrow doesn’t exactly make sense, but planning on quitting your job in the next 6 months is a great end goal. And goals make the path so much easier to see.

Maybe you are at that end goal. But you still haven’t quit yet. You are still holding on, even though every bone in your body is telling you to focus all your energy on you. I was consulting with a client a few months ago and when they started their DJ business their combined family income was \$75,000. After several years of successful DJ events, the DJ portion of their business was generating \$65,000. But yet they were still scared to quit. The proof was in the past performance. This company was going to be good, they just couldn’t believe in themselves.

Maybe you are nowhere near ready to quit the day job, but you have taken no serious steps to quit. Maybe you just think it will magically happen one day. That one day, it will all come together and your business will be thriving. Well guess what, it won’t. Nothing magically happens. Tomorrow will be just like today, except you are one day older and one more day away from getting to your dream.

You need to do something today. You need to start right now. The second you are done reading this should be your opportu-

nity to make tomorrow happen for you. So what can you do right now that will help? Try a few of the things below:

Start by writing down where you want to be in 6 months, 1 year and 5 years. Go into detail about the things you write down so your mind is clear on what you want. Leave nothing out.

When you are done, review what you wrote down and come up with the common, overall idea that you want to accomplish. For sake of this article, let’s say it is clear that being a full time DJ and running your own business is exactly what you want.

Now seriously look at that. For the next hour or so, start to right down every single thing that you need to attain that goal. No matter how simple or how intense, just write it down.

Then start to make sense of them. You want to create two columns: What you can do & what you need help with. Start to place all the things you wrote down into those columns.

Focus on “the what you can do columns” for now. Pick one. And think about just that. What can you do right now to make that happen tomorrow.

For many of us, we will have hundreds of things to do. And there will be no organization to make it look doable. But once we take a few moments and pick one task, things start to look much more attainable. And when something is more attainable, we find more motivation to do it.

It all starts with that one thing. Not one hundred. Build on the one thing and let that lead to another. Go to bed tonight so excited for tomorrow that you can hardly fall asleep! And when you wake up, make sure to believe in yourself! **MB**

*Jason Weldon is a wedding business consultant who specializes in small to medium-sized companies that want to grow their business. His objective is to help guide people through organizing their thoughts and laying the groundwork for a better, more successful start up. He currently lives in Philadelphia and is also the president of Synergetic Sound and Lighting, Inc. and DJ and A/V company.*



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